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GUN ROD AND SADDLE





# GUN ROD AND SADDLE

*A RECORD OF*  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

BY  
PARKER GILLMORE

("UBIQUE")

4005.108

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## P R E F A C E.

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HAVING had the honour of holding Commissions under Her Most Gracious Majesty's Flag in two Regiments of the Line, as well as appointments in the Military Train, in the Commissariat Department, and in the African Contingent force, as well as having been employed by the War Department during the Zulu Campaign, I have, in the course of my professional duties, visited many parts of the world. A natural turn for observation of the habits of wild animals, and a dislike of a wanton destruction of life, has led me to make the best use of my opportunities, whether in the dense forests of Asia, the prairies of North America, the rivers of Japan, the highlands of Morocco, the high-veldt of South Africa, or the vast expanse of the mid-ocean.

On my return to England I became a contributor to various periodicals on these subjects, retaining to myself the copyright of my productions. I have, therefore, collected them into one volume, and trust that the now largely increasing class of "Sportsmen Naturalists" will derive benefit and amusement from my experiences and adventures with "Gun, Rod, and Saddle."

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# GUN, ROD, AND SADDLE

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## WOLF COURSING.

FEW of us have not experienced the excitement of a gallop over a good grass country with the spotted beauties leading the way, getting over the ground at racing pace, while your mount is nearly hauling you out of the saddle with enthusiasm and inclination to make himself on still more familiar terms with the pack. By Jove, how reckless such excitement makes you feel ! Fear is banished for the time being—all sense of danger is dispelled to the winds, and sooner than be thrown out you would ride at a canal, or charge any height of timber. You may be old—yet for the time feel young : you may be *blasé*—you feel as buoyant as when you made your *début*. But it is far from the

grass counties, across three thousand miles of water and fifteen hundred of land—far beyond the giant Mississippi, to the illimitable prairies of the Far West I wish you to travel, in thought, at least. Imagine an unbounded expanse of undulating land, covered with grass ; here and there a sparse scattering of brush, with perhaps one or two lines of timber that mark the margin of tributaries of some mighty river, and you have the landscape without entering into detail. What a place for a gallop ! what a place for a buffalo run, or any other kind of run that will give your mettlesome nag an opportunity of showing his pluck and endurance. But take care, don't ride with a slack rein, keep your eyes open ; all may look plain sailing from the distance, but on closer inspection you may come upon a densely populated prairie-dog town, or collection of cayotte earths, each hole of which is big enough to use a Newfoundland for a fox terrier.

Two varieties of wolves are found numerous all over this elysium ; game is abundant, and the marauder is always on its track, looking out for the



feeble or unfortunate. Skulking scoundrels are these members of the canine fraternity, and cunning withal ; keen and successful hunters if necessary, but addicted to idleness ; for if they can obtain their dinner at others' expense, they are always ready to sacrifice their principle and sponge upon the first acquaintance. If you go out for pleasure, or with the desire of replenishing your larder, you are certain to be attended ; you cannot get away from camp without their watchful eyes detecting you. As you rise one knoll you may observe the escort topping the last, and intently keeping all your movements under their observation. Full well do they know that if elk or deer fall before your rifle, on the refuse that you reject, they will find a bounteous repast ; or if your hands and eyes forget their cunning, and a wounded unfortunate goes off, then the chances are that the whole carcass will fall to their share, and an unstinted feast on titbits ensue, for master *Lupus* has wonderful scenting powers, and with the trail spiced with blood he grudges no amount of exertion.

Again, the wolf is always in disgrace ; he steals your game if deserted for a few hours to procure assistance to transport it to camp ; he eats your lariats, untying your animals, nibbles the flaps of your saddles, and keeps up an unearthly serenade through those hours that the tired sportsman is most disposed to rest. Is it any wonder that he is unpopular, that he has no friends, and that he is considered a vermin of the first magnitude ? Although the American wolf is divided into many families, those we have to do with are the large grey species, and prairie variety, the former of which is a large ill-looking savage, the latter less repulsive, seldom over twenty-three inches at the shoulder, with more of the dog physiognomy, and a good deal of the fox in his nature. In all shooting excursions you will have idle days, a lay off for the more serious duties of the morrow, when guns are cleaned, bullets cast, cartridge belts replenished, and wet and dirty clothes dried or washed. The forenoon having sufficed to perform these labours, a run with a wolf will be found not a bad appetiser for your evening meal, or remover

of your little stiffnesses and ailments, in the same way as a little exercise is necessary to the hunter the day after a long or hard run. To enjoy this pleasure to perfection you must be provided with dogs, and there are none so suitable as the strongest stamp of greyhounds ; those that are addicted to grappling with the foe will get fearfully mauled, for the jaws of a wolf are almost as powerful as a hyena's, and consequently your limited establishment would be half the time on the sick list ; with the greyhound it is different. As soon as you get a view of the quarry at him they go, and although the game is swift, still his adversaries are not long in ranging alongside, when a snap in the hams or loins immediately brings him to bay. Determined and numerous are his efforts to catch the nimble antagonists, who take precious good care to keep beyond reach. After a few moments of such skirmishing, the closer approach of the sportsman admonishes the wolf to be moving, and off he again starts, best foot foremost ; but his persecutors are in attendance. A hundred or two yards may be traversed, and once more the game is brought

up standing from a similar cause ; thus the battle is played till the wolf is exhausted, and the sportsman gets sufficiently close to end the episode by a well-directed pistol bullet through the grizzly marauder's cranium.

Spearing the wolf on horseback is also capital sport ; but it takes a great deal out of your nag, for the scoundrel while fresh will jink almost as sharply as a hare, and from his wonderful lasting powers take you over an immense distance, he invariably choosing the roughest ground. In this mode also you must constantly be on the *qui vive*, for if opportunity offers he will make either your horse or yourself acquainted with his grinders, and a snap from him will be a memento. In the neighbourhood of Fort Riley an accident of this kind almost occurred to me. A large grey wolf jumped up before me, and as my horse was fresh and the afternoon cool, I made up my mind for a run. Drawing my revolver, and taking my nag in hand, we were soon skimming the prairie at a slashing pace. After a mile of this work I ranged alongside, but on several occasions when about to press



the trigger the wolf wheeled sharply to the right or left, once very nearly throwing my horse on his head. More determined to draw blood from the trick practised on me, I was soon again at his tail ; but the foe tried a new and quite unexpected ruse, viz. suddenly slackening his pace, and as I overshoot him, making a most wicked snap at my off foot, which fortunately was protected by a heavy cowhide boot ; but the indentation showed that a lighter covering would have caused me to regret my prowess.

If ever you visit the far Western Prairies you will not regret the trouble of taking with you some good strong greyhounds ; the rough Scotch dog I should prefer, for you will not only find them great promoters of your sport, wolf-hunting, but useful auxiliaries in pulling down wounded deer, as well as being most watchful and trustworthy camp guardians and companions.

## SHARKS JUMPING AT FOOD.

A correspondent who has been yachting during the summer, mentions the circumstance of a leg of mutton being lost which was hung over the side, and two blue sharks afterwards making their appearance ; doubtless they were there before the meat disappeared, and had an active part in its disappearance. When cruising in the fore-and-aft schooner *Sunny South*, on the Mosquito Coast, a few years since, the steward hung a roast of beef from one of the stern ports, and to his annoyance it was *non est* in the morning. The weather at the time was very calm, and it was consequently supposed that some fore-castle hands had got down in the rudder chains and appropriated it, although how it was to be cooked without discovery was difficult to know. However, a second

piece was about being hung out, which doubtless was to be well watched, when as the line was about to be made fast, a violent pull was felt, and on the steward running out his head through the port he found the thief to be a shark instead of a man, the fish having sprung at least three feet from the water to secure its prize. A friend of mine while fishing with a deep-sea line, was nearly losing his hand through one of these bloodthirsty prowlers of the deep. The fish had not been biting rapidly, and careless, from want of success, the hand in which he held the line was outside the gunwale of the boat and close to the water's surface; fortunately he happened to cast his eye at the moment overboard, and just in time, for a shark seven or eight feet long was close to the surface, coming straight for it. On examining the head of a shark it will be seen that from the position of the eyes they can well see what is taking place above them, and in all instances where I have observed them take a bait, they always got underneath before seizing, turning on their side at the moment of laying hold. I never previously, till reading an

authority's remarks, saw it stated that a shark scented his prey ; nevertheless, I have long thought so, and that their olfactory nerves are of the greatest acuteness and use in directing them to where food is to be found. On two occasions, once in the Southern Indian Ocean, on another off the north Coast of South America, near Los Rocas, although no sharks had been seen previously, they appeared about the ship, soon after some of the most venturous had bathed. Again, I was on board a vessel becalmed, within sight of the volcanic rocks, St. Paul's and New Amsterdam. The Captain kindly lent his gig to myself and companions to procure some specimens of Cape pigeons, Cape hens, and albatross. A great number of birds were killed, and whether it was the scent of blood or not, I cannot say, but a white shark about ten feet long joined us, and remained by us till our return to the ship. He was afterwards caught by using a Cape hen for bait. On examining the head of a shark, the snout will be found to project a long way over the upper jaw, and although there are no regular

nostrils defined, such as will be found in the salmon or trout, there are a great number of minute orifices, doubtless intended for smelling, and which duty I am inclined to believe they most ably perform.



## [SEAL PRESERVE.

NOVELTIES are universally run after, but who will try to adopt the following? True it is not in the power of many; still some have the facilities. We have deer parks, pheasant covers, grouse moors, and rabbit warrens; still we have no seal preserve. I can fancy I see salmon fishermen looking aghast at the proposal, and exclaiming emphatically, "What! Give a home and protection to the destroyers of my darling children *Salmo salar*?" Such a proceeding would be worse than sacrilege, and all the other abominable crimes known, taken collectively and assorted into one heap." Within easy ride of San Francisco, the capital of California, is situated the Ocean House—a great resort in warm weather and holidays of the *élite* of this prosperous Pacific city, for here at all times a

fresh breeze can be inhaled, and, excepting during a calm, the grandest, largest waves seen, lashing with impetuous fury the precipitous towering cliffs of the wild iron-bound coast. Close to the Ocean House are some rocks, and on these at all hours can be seen numbers of seals. The Legislature of the State has passed an Act for their protection, and so well does Master Phoca know his safety that I doubt if he would not dispute possession of his demesne with any representative of *genus homo* that had the temerity to intrude. The Californians are very proud of these pets, and well may they be, for they form a strange and most interesting picture, reclining in all attitudes, young and old, big and little, free from fear and happy in their security. Many of them have been named from some fancied resemblance to persons. One, the king in stature, and most savage and repulsive in physiognomy, bears the *sobriquet* of Benjamin Butler, of New Orleans notoriety. An old resident informs me that he remembers this veteran seal for years, and that his countenance was a good index of his temper. At night, from the Ocean

House, you can constantly hear them bellowing, and old Butler's voice, from its depth and volume, is easily distinguished over the others. I expect that San Francisco for many years to come will be the only city that possesses a preserve of pet seals.

## OYSTER CULTURE.

WITH much pleasure, both in the United States and in England, I have read a number of most interesting press communications in reference to oyster culture. It has long struck me that not nearly enough attention was paid by my fellow-countrymen to this unbounded field of operations and wealth, and if they still continue to neglect their opportunities after the ability and energy with which the Press has pointed out the means of prosecuting the good work, let the onus lay on their own shoulders, for truly they deserve it. It is a well-known adage "that one man can take a horse to water, but an unlimited number cannot make him drink;" the horse might not be thirsty, and there are excuses for his refusal. But dear old England,

with her immense population, is always hungry, and has always mouths to feed, and I feel certain that with the amount of admirable coast that our island home has, this description of food, which is both wholesome and nutritious, could with due attention become so cheap that it would be within the reach of both rich and poor. I do not for a moment profess to be a naturalist, but while sojourning in North America, where oyster culture has been studied and practically tested for many years, the experience of some of the most capable persons in various sections of that country I learned, and they unanimously agreed with what I have lately seen stated, that a warm summer is the great desideratum for a productive deposit of spat. In fact, I can see no other feasible reasons to be advanced by our Transatlantic cousins for their well-known success than that the warm waters of the Gulf Stream run along their coast, and that they have intense, almost tropical, heat in summer, such, in fact, as we have had the year before last.

Accounts unanimously agree that deposits of



spat had been most abundant that year, but if the heat should be less in the coming one, and should the produce only be one-half, I am still convinced that the returns would be far more than sufficient to indemnify the outlay of cultivation ; however, if a difference of opinion should exist, the experiment is worth trying, which, if successful, forget not to give the praise to whom it is due. Of course a great number of our fellow-countrymen know the United States ; some of those may have taken interest in this subject, and possibly are better informed than I am, still there must be a great mass that know nothing about the American oyster ; to those, then, I will give the benefit of my experience. From Massachusetts to Florida, with more or less abundance, oyster fisheries have been established, not only for dredging but for cultivating. The result is that this delicacy can be obtained at moderate charges even in the interior towns and cities, such as St. Louis and Chicago ; in fact there is scarcely a respectable *table d'hôte* eastward of the Mississippi on whose bill of fare they are not to be found. In the Dominion, where

the winters are proverbially severe, they are equally abundant; New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and the estuary of the St. Lawrence, have long proved themselves prolific in this respect; corroborative of the fact that if you can get heat, such as we annually have, it does not matter how severe the winter may prove for the abundant reproduction of these bivalves.

It has struck me that the American oyster may be of a different species from our own; the shape is not the same, and the flavour (possibly many will say this is prejudice) I think if possible finer. If they are, could not the home-bred species be benefited by introducing the stranger? Experiment would soon elucidate this, for the American if packed with the hollow side of the shell down in solid masses, can be kept alive for months; in fact, I have been shown them thus stowed away in cellars, where they had been built in for over ten weeks; what, then, would a voyage of seven days under such circumstances signify? the motion of the vessel might shake out some of their moisture (on which they subsist), but certainly not all.

The "pinna" fisheries of the Mediterranean some years ago used to be most abundant ; from want of culture, and improvements in dredging machinery, it has lately sadly deteriorated, almost to nil. In enlightened England don't let us follow the example of the improvident natives of Southern Europe, who so long as they can obtain the dinner of the day, care not and think not where to-morrow's is to come from.

## AMERICAN PARTRIDGE.

(*Ortex Virginiensis.*)

IF all our countrymen who have travelled abroad or sojourned in foreign lands had done so with their eyes shut, or if not keeping them closed had refused to give their countrymen the benefit of their experience, a useless lot they would have been, and England, as far as progression is concerned, would have been far behind her present advanced position. He who first introduced the idea of crossing our native horse with the foreigner did an immense public service ; he who introduced the old Spanish pointer deserves the gratitude of every sportsman, for doubtless our present beauties, with all their speed and sagacity, have much of the blear-eyed, bad-tempered, pottering old scoundrels' blood in their veins ; and still further, to foreign climes we trace the pheasant, the turkey,

and so many more valuable animals, that to enumerate them would be tedious. However, I believe that there are quadrupeds, birds, and fishes, still strangers to our land, who but require to be known to be appreciated; and by placing the merits of any of them before the public, some one may be found sufficiently patriotic to make the attempt to naturalize them.

Without more preamble, and to come at once to the point, let me say that in my humble opinion there is no bird more worthy of attention, and more deserving of the honour of introduction to our preserves, than the Virginian partridge, often misnamed in America quail. Its numerous good qualities, together with its description, I will to the best of my knowledge give, hoping it may be the means of yet seeing this little beauty ornamenting our fields, and adding brilliancy and variety to the game bags of our numerous enthusiastic sportsmen. The American partridge varies in weight from eight to ten ounces, is erect in his walk, very handsome in plumage, strong upon the wing, feeds principally upon grain, grass seed, and insects,

frequents indifferently brush, timber, or open country, is capable of standing great cold, is not quarrelsome with other game, is very prolific, frequently hatching two broods in a season. Moreover, an advantage which cannot be too highly estimated, is that it never gets wild so as to rise far from your dogs as to be out of gunshot, a nuisance that all are so well aware of in our home-bred bird towards the end of the season. In fact, who that shoots regularly cannot remember instances of our partridge disappearing over the far side of a field as soon as the sportsman had entered it? Now, in years of experience in America, I never saw an instance of this kind: up to the commencement of the close season they would remain almost as tame as they were at the termination of the previous one. A reason for this may be that they seldom pack; only once or twice have I seen more than the usual number of a covey together, and then remarked that the weather had been unusually severe and stormy.

A peculiarity, however, this bird possesses is that in wet and slushy weather it will frequently when



disturbed take shelter on the limbs of trees, from where if flushed it affords the hardest possible shot. This bird in the open is by no means easy to hit, for his flight is very strong and swift, and frequently irregular, but it does not go far, so that a good marker seldom has much trouble to refind it. Some persons are under the impression that this partridge is migratory ; however, this is a mistake, for although they may wander from their breeding place, from constant attention I am convinced that the change of quarters is caused from scarcity of food. On the edges of the dry prairies in Southern Illinois, in early autumn, this bird abounds, in winter they disappear into the neighbouring thickets and brush, for why ? the prairies are constantly burned at the end of the season, and consequently starvation or change of residence are their alternatives. In one section of the country that I resided in a great portion of the prairie land was too wet to burn, and many a heavy bag I obtained late in the season, even when the roots of the grass were submerged in ice. My dogs, which I invariably broke upon them, seldom made mis-

takes, and never do I remember a covey departing (except the pointer or setter had run into them coming down wind) without getting at least a barrel into them. I believe these birds are equally adapted for naturalization into either England, Scotland, or Ireland, and with other varieties of game they appear to agree well, for I have on several occasions killed this partridge with one barrel, and the ruffed grouse with the other over the same point.

As a table delicacy I know no greater; for weeks I have constantly had them at both breakfast and dinner, still without becoming satiated, and there are very few varieties of game could stand a more severe test. Their note or call is remarkably melodious, and in the spring or pairing time, when they are numerous, you can hear their sweet voice all day long, and in every direction. I have always regretted that no one has thought of introducing this little stranger, and nothing could afford me greater pleasure than to be the medium, for I feel perfectly confident that he would never have occasion to regret the experiment.

## AQUATIC HARE.

ANY new or but slightly known animals, their habits and modes of life, are subjects of great interest to both the naturalist and the sportsman ; permit me therefore to call attention to an aquatic member of the *Lepus* family, with which I became acquainted during my sojourn in North America.

A little before sunset, on a fine calm evening in March, I took my stand upon a bridge crossing a slough in the southern portion of Illinois, with the hope of killing a few wild ducks. The atmosphere was so clear and still that the birds were very late in visiting their feeding grounds. While impatiently trying to kill time, I saw something swimming in the water, and supposing it to be a common American musk-rat,

and being desirous of a new tobacco-pouch, I stealthily stole along the margin of the water, well hid in the flags, to endeavour to obtain a closer shot, for the musk-rat requires a tremendous deal of killing. However, having knocked over my game, in a few minutes my retriever laid it at my feet ; but imagine my surprise when, instead of a rat, I found it to be a hare. I could scarcely believe my senses, but seeing is believing. Of course I thought that the poor creature had been driven to water to avoid a foe, but before many days I shot several, and all in similar situations. The habits of this new variety I now made a study, and found that they were amphibious, sleeping in form on the edge of the morass during the heat of the day, and feeding before sunrise and after sunset on the different descriptions of water plants. Whether this hare was able to dive or not I did not ascertain, but that it is a most expert swimmer there can be no doubt. Its size is the same as that of our common wild rabbit, but from its build being thicker it may possibly be heavier. The legs are short, feet large, ears small, and head very full

and round: colour dark-greyish brown, with scarcely any white upon the scut, and the fur exceedingly soft and fine. I frequently tested the flesh on the table, and can speak in the highest approval of its delicious flavour, which is much lighter in shade than that of any other of the same family with which I am acquainted. The skin, which is very thin, is easily removed from the carcase; but great care must be taken to prevent it getting torn. On inquiring, I found that this hare was well known by the settlers, and from them learned that it bred only once a year, generally producing two at a birth; and that the young at a very early age follow their mother in her sundry aquatic excursions in search of those delicate water plants that form their staple food.

## SALMON IN JAPAN

(*Sálmo Salar*).

NO person, I am certain no gentleman, ever disputes the nobility of the salmon ; it is an aristocrat with all, whether they be disciples of Isaac Walton or believers in Dr. Johnson's interpretation of the word "fisherman." As this noble fish is so universally popular, it may not be without interest to know that it is more universally scattered over this world than is generally supposed, and that it is a highly appreciated article of food, and of great commercial value, in countries so far distant from our island home that we may almost with safety call it a cosmopolitan of the northern hemisphere.

That the salmon was found in abundance in all rivers in America, from the Hudson, New York



State, northward, all probably are aware ; that it is extremely numerous in those rivers that flow north, through the Hudson Bay territory, into the ice-bound Arctic seas, few are cognizant ; but that it perfectly swarms in the streams and estuaries of the North Pacific Ocean, many, I am certain, are ignorant. Yet it does swarm in those distant waters, until lately only known to whalers and fur traders, in such countless multitudes, that its arrival is looked forward to from season to season as the great event of the year—for with its coming privations from hunger terminate, and an abundance of nutritious food is not only temporarily secured, but a hoard laid up sufficient to last through the protracted term of a rigorous northern winter.

When travelling in Japan, what was my delight to hear that salmon were numerous in the most northern of these favoured islands ! Naturally I looked forward with avidity to the hope that I might be so situated as to obtain a day's fishing on the margin of one of its distant rivers ; however, in this I was disappointed, but nevertheless had the fortune to make acquaintance with an intelli-

gent Japanese merchant, who not only showed me numerous specimens of the genuine *Salmo salar*, but gave me abundant information regarding their habits and the method there pursued for their capture. From observation, inquiry, and research, I am inclined to believe that the salmon, whether in the Atlantic or Pacific, seldom approaches nearer the Equator than the 41st or 42nd deg. of north latitude. On the Atlantic seaboard of the state of New York, the Hudson river formerly was his southern limit; but alas, that stream is now totally deserted by these valuable visitors, the result of weirs, or the indiscriminate pollution of the stream with the *débris* of saw-mills, chemical filth from manufactories, etc. On the eastern shores of the Pacific the same parallel will be found the southern boundary of this fish; while on the coast of Japan, Tartary, and Siberia its haunts are marked by the same line of debarkation.

From the exclusive laws of the Japanese Government, I was unable to travel further to the north than Yeddo, except that it were to visit the port of Hakodadi, and consequently was prevented

from obtaining a personal knowledge of the homes and resorts of the salmon; for although they are brought in immense numbers into the latter town for sale, they are not captured in the immediate vicinity. The Japanese salmon that I examined resembled those taken on the Tay, from their excessive depth and thickness in proportion to their length. Their average weight appeared to be about twelve or fourteen pounds, yet several I saw would have turned the scales at thirty. The colour of the skin was in all less brilliant than in our home acquaintances, possibly the result of transportation, the method of curing, or the shade and consistency of the water out of which they had been taken. However, the flesh was undeniably excellent, and brilliant in hue, and in no way inferior to those from our most appreciated rivers.

From my informant I found that the habits of their fish were identical with ours, and that so great were their numbers that they formed the staple article of food for the poorer residents of the northern portion of the Japanese archipelago;

that they were captured principally by stake nets, set in the fluvial portion of the rivers; and that the English method of taking them with a fly (which I explained) was entirely unknown. As I could not have the honour of being the first of my countrymen to capture a Japanese salmon in the legitimate sportsman's methods, I may have had the honour of tying the first artificial flies that ever were cast on a Japanese river; for so interested was my listener—and the Japanese are wonderfully intelligent, totally the reverse of the self-conceited, pig-headed Chinaman—that I dressed a couple of what I considered the most killing specimens, which he promised to use, as instructed, on the first available opportunity.

A Russian officer whom I some months afterwards met at Tien-tsing, and who had been for years stationed on the Pacific, gave me the most glowing account of the immense quantities of salmon that frequented the Amoor river and its tributaries, and his information perfectly tallied with that obtained from my Japanese friend. Now, the mouth of this river and the northern

portion of the Japan group of islands are in about the same latitude, and are only separated by about three or four hundred miles of sea, showing that most perfect credence might be given to both informants.

Fifty years ago who would have thought of going to Norway to fish? Possibly, as the world grows older, with the rapid strides of improvement in machinery and transportation, we may hear of fishing parties being organized for Japan and Siberia, and, in addition to the numerous splendid specimens of *Salmo salar* that now decorate South Kensington Museum, we shall also see numerous beauties that once parted with their silver sides the blue waters of the Pacific.

## WILDFOWL SHOOTING.

IN my protracted rambles about the world I know no portion of it where this sport can be more thoroughly enjoyed than in the United States and Canada. I have always been passionately fond of wildfowl shooting, and the bags that I have made there have far exceeded those obtained in other places. As wildfowl are nearly all migratory by inclination, or are compelled to be so from the changes of the seasons, it is of great importance that you should visit the various haunts at the proper periods of the year. However, the rule is, for successfully carrying on war against the web-footed families, go north in summer and south in winter. In June, July, and August, the wild rice fields of the numerous labyrinths of lakes of Minnesota and the North-West territory, perfectly



swarm with wildfowl, while in December and January they will be found equally numerous on the large bayous and lagoons that surround the mouth of the Mississippi. Of course in the intermediate portion of country between Minnesota and the Gulf of Mexico, during the seasons of migration, splendid days' shooting can be obtained ; but the stay of the birds is so short that it would not compensate for a special visit. Where thousands are to be seen to-day, not a dozen will be met to-morrow ; but if you should happen in the spring and autumn to be in either of the states of Illinois, Iowa, or Indiana, when the frost and ice are breaking up in spring, or when winter makes its first appearance, you may with safety calculate on having some of the finest sport. A year or two since when in Illinois in November, a sudden change took place in the weather, and although the morning was ushered in mild and warm, by noon it was snowing with a gale of wind blowing from the north. From experience I knew that such a day was not to be wasted over the fire, so got on my shooting ground with a very large

supply of ammunition, and in two or three hours I had to cease, as my stock was exhausted. My stand was in a field of Indian corn that had been gathered into shocks, from the back of one of which I took shelter from the blast as well as concealment. Never shall I forget the scene. The ducks came in thousands, all flying before the wind, and if a dozen guns had been there instead of one, abundant work would have been found for all. On another occasion, in the same locality, two friends of mine killed in two or three hours in the evening, and in an hour and a half the succeeding morning, eighty-four wild geese and thirty brace of mallard duck. In the spring of 1866 when in Iowa, the first day of thaw I went for a stroll, scarcely expecting to find game; but when I got on the prairie land, I was perfectly astonished at the clouds of wildfowl arriving from the south, some of the ponds being so densely covered with duck that the surface could scarcely be seen. These birds were all coming from the south, where they had passed the winter. If any of my readers intend to go in for work and do not object to

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roughing it, I should most decidedly say that the wildfowl shooting is good enough to justify a visit; but let him not be induced to keep in the vicinity of settlements; but let him and his attendants commence housekeeping on the margin of one of the northern Minnesota lakes if in summer (remember one that produces an abundance of wild rice); but if the reverse season should be selected, the southern tributaries of the Mississippi will afford him abundant sport, and any of the hospitable southern planters will deem it a favour if he will do them the honour of making their house his home.

## SHOOTING IN BARBARY.

THERE are a great number of gentlemen who can spare the time but not the money to rent at the present fabulous prices shooting at home. For the benefit of such I will state that capital shooting can be obtained at Tangiers, and that the expense of going and returning, including a stay of a month, need not exceed forty pounds. Gibraltar, your first stopping-place, can be reached by one of the Peninsular and Oriental steamships from Southampton, or by one of the numerous Mediterranean steamships sailing from Liverpool. The passage money by the former to go and return would be about twelve pounds, by the latter less. From Gibraltar feluccas almost daily cross to Tangiers—twice a week formerly, and probably still a steamboat with cattle does the same. The

fare for this portion of the journey should not exceed a couple of dollars, and a good hotel will be found on arrival, where I have resided at the rate of one dollar per diem. Safely established under the guardianship of the hostess, you can obtain all desirable information, and a guide to the shooting ground if such you deem necessary. An hour's ride from the town, going inland, will bring you upon splendid ground, either scrubby brushwood, covered slopes, or open grass and palmetto plains. The game principally found is red legged partridge, which, contrary to our home experience of the same, here lays well to a dog. Hares are also plentiful, snipe, plover, and the lesser bustard not uncommon. Just beyond Cape Spartel there is a small river on which I have killed a great number of duck, and a mile or two further on an immense swamp, known by the name of "the Lagoon," where snipe and wildfowl may be killed in abundance, as well as woodcock and wild boar. As the gates of Tangiers are always locked at sunset, you have to hurry home at an inconveniently early hour, but if you do not object to

roughing, and prefer a long day and large bag to the luxury of a well-aired bed and comfortable apartment, you can easily arrange so as to sleep at one of the numerous Arab villages or douars. Of course to do this you will require an interpreter, who should also perform both functions of cook and major-domo. But to one inconvenience you will have to submit, viz. fleas. They may not be the largest in the world, but for numbers and bloodthirsty proclivities I will back them against any others. The Moors are a fine, manly, handsome race, and invariably sportsmen. To a proficient with the gun they soon attach themselves. At times I have been followed for hours by some of them, and a clever double shot would always elicit their admiration. However, there are some ugly stories in circulation of shipwrecked sailors and adventurous Europeans having received anything but a hearty welcome; but this is directly in contradiction to my experience, for day after day alone I shot amongst them, and frequently slept in their villages with no other attendant than a youth from the hotel at Tangiers, and the inhabi-



stants' conduct was uniformly kind and courteous. The weather also is delightful in autumn, and the country extremely pretty, while all around the town are abundant objects worthy of a visit on your idle days. In fact, I have little hesitation in predicting that the first visit to Tangiers and its surroundings will most probably not be the last.

## THE STRIPED BASS.

THIS fish is known the entire length of the seaboard of the United States, and is almost as popular as the salmon. The reasons for this are : it is game in the highest sense of the word, fighting with the most determined obstinacy as long as its strength will permit, also frequents alike the ocean tideway or river, taking generally with avidity the greatest varieties of natural and artificial baits, and ultimately is fit food for the most fastidious epicure. By naturalists it is placed among the *perka*, and has been named *Perka labrax*, an indignity of which it is in no way deserving, for it is built on the beautiful lines of the salmon, possibly with a little more depth and beam, and in colour has a near approach to that of the lordly *Salmo salar*, save that horizontally

along its sides are placed several lines (generally seven) from the gills to the tail, and from which it doubtless derives its familiar name. Early in April, if the weather be favourable, this fish makes its appearance in the rivers *en route* to their spawning beds—(from this date it becomes the object of attention to the pot-hunter, for I cannot call the man who tries to capture fish in a gravid state by the name of fisherman)—where it remains for some time, probably over a couple of months.

Spawning performed, they return again to the coast, affording sport for a short period, then disappear to return in September and October in immense numbers, gladdening with their advent the heart of every sportsman.

Their size is so varied that they may be taken from the weight of a few ounces up to sixty and even more pounds, the heavier fish generally being captured late in the season ; and woe betide the angler if unprepared he should strike his hook into one of the leviathans, for all his fishing paraphernalia will certainly receive so severe a shock as to render it for after use completely worthless,

that is, the portion that is left with him. After spawning, this fish does not lose its condition like the salmon, therefore its capture immediately subsequent is not nearly so reprehensible, the propagation of its species not injuring it to a noticeable extent, therefore if it be fished for in the rivers after that duty is performed, nothing is so successful for its capture as a gaudy sea-trout fly ; but the striped bass is not dainty, and many persons of experience persistently use with the greatest success a piece of white or scarlet rag tied over their hook instead of the more complicated and expensive imitation. However, fishing in the sea, the shrimp is the most popular and gentlemanly bait, trolled along the surface after the manner of the fly, at which the fish break similar to trout or salmon ; still there are days when you cannot thus allure them ; and soft shell crab, spearing (a small transparent fish about the size of a minnow), or squid, have to be resorted to ; even the spoon bait has been known to be successful when all other attractions have failed.

Although this fish annually chooses a change

from salt to fresh water, still it is not necessary for its existence, numbers having been experimented on by detaining them for years in fresh, where instead of losing flesh, they were pronounced to have improved much both in size and condition. So exceedingly popular is the striped bass in America, that those watering places in whose vicinity it is known to abound, receive annually an immense influx of visitors, attracted chiefly by the prospect of enjoying this fishing. Even club-houses have been built, and large associations formed of the principal gentlemen in and about New York, who spend a great portion of their summer vacation at these retreats, and I have been informed by many of the members (some of them salmon fishermen of experience) that the sport they enjoy is only second to what they could obtain on Labrador or Canadian salmon rivers.

I believe that this fish could be most easily introduced to our waters, and that it is well deserving of the effort, for it is very hardy, and I do not think so likely to be affected by the pollu-

tion that so many of our streams suffer from ; they also appear to be immensely prolific, for traffic, netting, drainage, etc., may have reduced their numbers, still they are to be found in great abundance even in such crowded water thoroughfares as the Bay of New York, Hudson and East rivers, so that any person duly initiated in the necessary mysteries can, at the proper seasons, confidently expect a heavy basket as a reward for his trouble of fishing for them, and that within sight of the numerous spires, storehouses, and business haunts of the handsome western metropolis.

Great and unprecedented trouble has been lately taken successfully to introduce salmon and trout to the southern hemisphere ; with how much less difficulty could this fish be transported here ; no tropics to cross, only one fourth or fifth the distance to traverse, and steamships to be found sailing almost every day of the week. Certainly this matter is worthy of consideration, for not only would thousands find amusement and health in their capture, but a wholesome and excellent article of food be provided for our immense population.



## SHOOTING IN CHINA.

“YOU may go to Hong Kong.” This name is frequently substituted for another place currently supposed to be warmer, but at the same time in close proximity, for the soldiers used to say, on whose authority I know not, that there was only a sheet of brown paper between the two. However this may be, Hong Kong is a very warm quarter during the southern monsoon, for the high hills that protect the back of the garrison, at that season shut out every breath of air. For all this I never saw the thermometer over 98° Fahr. in the shade, so that according to statements of some of the late residents at Wimbledon, England in tropical heat can successfully compete with the world. But if the weather should be warm in this distant portion of her Majesty’s dominions during

one portion of the year, the temperature is delightful when the northern monsoon sets in, so outdoor amusements can by contrast be the more appreciated. The characteristic features of this island are a succession of mountain peaks, in parts very rocky and barren, the other hill sides being covered with stunted brush. However, there are two valleys tolerably well covered with timber, viz. the Happy Valley and Taytan Valley; in the former is the racecourse, where annually is held a meeting, also the graveyard, where worn-out man is deposited. A pretty spot is the Happy Valley. The name, I think, not inappropriate, when we remember that it is the place of assembly, where crowds meet to enjoy the equine contests, or where man is laid to rest from all the troubles and annoyances of this life after he has run out his worldly course. The quantity of game to be found in the island is very limited, and consists of a few deer, a few pheasants, some partridges (much resembling the black partridge of India), and at certain seasons quail and snipe; but sport is ever most uncertain, and half-a-dozen birds, all told,

will be deemed a successful day's work. But if Hong Kong does not afford many inducements for the lover of the double-barrel, the adjacent mainland, when you are acquainted with the localities, does; and if the reader will have patience, I will endeavour to give a sketch of an expedition, and of the ground visited. Fancy yourself on a rattan-built wharf running into the harbour from the go-downs at the back of the Danish consulate, a handsome lorcha of about sixty tons, taut-hauled up to her anchor, waiting impatiently a hundred yards from the shore for the moment of departure, while two or three sampans are incessantly plying back and forth, loaded with guns, dogs, portmanteaux, and good things for the inward man, ranging over the interval that exists between *pâté de foie gras* and *Madame Cliquot*. At last the final load is delivered, time is up, the blue Peter is hoisted at the fore, and at the instructions of our kind-hearted host, we descend into his gig, and are rapidly on board the lorcha. The wind, which is fresh, just suits; a few turns on the somewhat primitive capstan trips

the anchor, and shaking out the immense mainsail, her head is pointed for the Cap-shee-moon Pass, the great high-road of traffic between Hong Kong and Canton.

As we leave the labyrinth of shipping and junks of every nationality and shape, and draw farther clear of the land, our speed increases to eight knots. The pass reached, two or three tacks have to be made, when we stand direct for Castle Peak Bay, our destination ; and what a pretty spot it is, sheltered from the cold winds : both grass and shrubs grow in luxuriance down to the edge of the water, while at the head of the bay is situated one of those quaint joss houses, of architecture peculiarly Chinese, and imbedded in a grove of banians. The country around is a succession of rolling hills, gradually gaining height as they recede from the bay till they reach an elevated rocky ridge of most irregular outline, one portion resembling an old castellated ruin, from which, doubtless, this placid bay gains its name. When within a hundred yards of shore, "let go the anchor" was given, and the craft swung round and we surveyed our shooting

ground with satisfaction expressed on every countenance.

The day before our party started, information had been brought by a cooley, that quails, in their regular autumnal migratory flight, had arrived; and scarcely had we progressed inland a hundred paces before the dogs were standing, and from that moment, till dark, the time for loading was even grudged. The quantity that we brought to bag I forget, and consequently fear to make a statement of numbers; but this I know, it far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. The country around here appears at no late date to have been cultivated; but whether the peaceful tillers of the soil had desisted on account of the neighbourhood having obtained a very bad reputation for piracy I know not, but experience in the Mediterranean tells me how fond these little migratory beauties are of haunts that the plough has ceased to turn up. Next morning our range took us further inland, the quails still were abundant; but as we got to the upper ridges, where a dwarf palmetto flourishes, the Chinese partridge was

found. This bird has a very strong resemblance to the black partridge of India in plumage, but exceeds it in size ; never is found in coveys, and lies extremely close before a dog. Time after time I have walked up to a point, quartered my ground, or headed my setter ; still no bird was visible ; believing it to be a false alarm, I have been on the point of giving up the search, when whirr, the wily bird would rise, and go off like a thunderbolt. In all my experience, I know no other whose flushing makes such a commotion, or whose flight is so rapid.

This bird is not very abundant, and is called by the Chinese Cha-coo, doubtless from its note, which much resembles these two syllables when whistled. Four or five brace of them in a mixed bay is considered extra luck ; still I have killed within the space of two hundred yards three couple, each bird flushing singly and apart. About midday we reached a Chinese village, imbedded in trees, with a considerable cover lying backwards from it. After lunch we beat it, and three splendid pheasants were our reward. The pheasant of Southern



China is truly a regal bird in comparison with our home-bred introduction. They weigh one-half more, and their flight is so rapid, that if the sportsman, in a cross shot, does not shoot well ahead, his game bag will long be kept ignorant of their weight and dimensions. Two or three times during the day I was frightfully fooled. The dogs were standing stiff as a fence-rail, and of course something extra was justly expected, when, what do you think? a bird that feeds on snakes and lizards, lumbering in flight, and of gross plumage, was flushed. In the south of China this species is known as the crow pheasant, his size and long tail having doubtlessly gained the latter portion of the appellation; but on inspection, no one can help wondering at the indignity the bird of Colchis has suffered in having such a brute bear his patronymic. This filthy-feeding bird is of the cocoo family. During this day's work several painted quails were bagged—a truly beautiful little bird, smaller than his namesake, but swift on the wing, and more delicate, if possible, on the table. Still they are so small, and the brilliant feathers so

delicately pencilled, that I never cease to consider their death as an unnecessary slaughter.

Time flies on rapid wing ; I had only three days' leave of absence, so that one day more was only left ; duck and snipe shooting I have always had a passion for, so when we arose in the morning, not much refreshed with sleep (for the cowardly Chinese coolies kept constantly sounding the alarm of *Lally lunes—anglicè*, pirates—which of necessity turned out the whole party revolver in hand), we determined to devote our last day to this sport. A wide expanse of distant marsh and paddy fields was our beat, and well it was that such a decision was come to, for we truly had some splendid sport. Several ducks, a host of bitterns of every size and colour, and innumerable snipes, composed our bag, the painted variety of the latter being very numerous. Although this is a handsome bird in appearance, it is sadly behind the common species in sporting requisites, being heavy and slow of flight, seldom wild, and very inferior for the table. That night we beat back to Hong Kong harbour, while the stentorian lungs of one of the party, and the

key-bugle of another, awoke the slumbering echoes of the neighbouring hills, and astonished the celestial seamen, who passed on their various missions, with "what all that bobbery could be."

Castle Peak, from what I have said, can easily be found by any of the sportsmen at the distant garrison of Hong Kong; but there are numerous other shooting grounds as good, and scarcely farther distant, viz. the Shangmoon Valley, at the top of Pirates' Bay, the covers at the top of which always harbour pheasants; the far side of Meer's Bay, after crossing the Kowloone Ridge, have afforded me many days' excellent sport; and the nearest end of Llama Island, about an hour's sail from the Barracks, if occasionally visited, will yield ample remuneration for a few hours' work.

## DUCK SHOOTING IN AMERICA.

IT may not be uninteresting to sportsmen to have an account of what sport they may look forward to if chance or intention should place them on the prairies of the Western Continent. It has long been my belief that Nature had strongly before her the wants of the votaries of field sports when this favoured land was constructed, for the abundance of indigenous food, the variety of cover, the distribution of water, and the salubrity of the climate are such, that probably in no other portion of the globe can similar happy combinations be found ; and as a result, the abundance of game falls not one iota behind what might be expected. In wild-fowl shooting there are two desiderata on which success depends—first, suitable weather ; secondly, the gunner being clothed in appropriate colours.

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Having both the above advantages, please to imagine yourselves, on a cold blustering afternoon, a few flakes of snow falling, and a strong presentiment of a severe frost before morning, situated among the withered leaves of a persimmon bush, on the edge of interminable slough in the centre of one of the western prairies. In every direction that you cast your eyes ducks will be seen, flock upon flock, while single birds, like the connecting links of an advance or rear guard, dart here, there, and everywhere. Having arranged your stand and ammunition most conveniently, as every moment is of value, look out ; you will not be kept long waiting ere such work commences as you seldom or never previously enjoyed. Your situation, half up to your knees in slush and water, may not be conducive to comfort, but all the inconvenience is more than overbalanced by the excitement of the moment ; and what will not a man endure if possessed of true sporting proclivities, to gratify his passion, and does he not consider himself more than rewarded for wet feet by the possession of a heavy bag, alike evidence of his skill and hardihood.

On an afternoon of November —, I started for my screen ; the weather was such as clearly foretold the sport to be anticipated. My hardy mustang soon brought me to the scene of operations, and after attending to his creature comforts, I stationed myself in my blind, a few corn stalks and grass having been added to the withered foliage of the bush I had selected to hide behind ; further, I had tied a bunch of prairie grass around my cap, to assimilate it more to the colour of the cheerless landscape ; at my feet was a true and very dear friend, a setter, whose perfections in the hunting field or retrieving by land or water I never saw excelled. At first the sport was but languid, only an occasional duck passing within range, so that after an hour only four or five mallards had been grassed, but as the day advanced and the weather became more inclement, I had less leisure to ruminate and take note of the passage of time. By four p.m. the ball had opened in earnest ; if I had had two guns and an attendant to load, still they would not have been idle. First come half-a-dozen



mallards sweeping along in front of the blast, their pace terrific; about forty yards off they pass to the left; with intuitive knowledge, the gun comes to the shoulder and eye, and at the correct moment the triggers are pressed; good two yards in front have I to shoot, and my judgment is correct, for a bird topples over to each report whilst the survivors rush upwards with unaltered speed, take a sweep round to find from whence comes the danger, and, disliking the neighbourhood, start for parts unknown and less to be dreaded.

As I hastily reload, keeping an eye all the time to windward, what is that ever-changing cloud I see, reminding one of the reflected light that glances off the backs of a flight of grey plovers? By Jove, they are blue-winged teal! On, on they come, occasionally rising or swooping downwards as fancy directs. In a moment they will be here—for your life don't move; even depress your eyes so that the rim of your hat will prevent the leaders seeing them. At last they are within range, and each barrel's course is

marked by a lane of birds, whom the shot has caused to alter their forward movement. As night approaches, the pintail and butter ducks put in an appearance, and without cessation your gun plays its part, till the pile of game at your feet becomes enormous, and Beau is never permitted to have an idle moment. At length darkness increases, you think of going home, yet still linger for one or two more shots. Now you can only see the birds on the wing that are between your sight and some clear place in the sky, but around you on the water are thousands. Every arrival is greeted with a loud quack, quack, frequently so close at hand that you start, almost believing that one of your victims has come to life. But hark ! what is that honk ! honk ! Geese ! I can't go till I dust some of their jackets. As none of all the web-footed tribe are so wary, extra precaution is necessary. At length you see a massive dark line against the sole clear portion of western sky remaining. Would that heavier shot were in my gun. Onwards they come, slowly and cautiously. Waiting until they are nearly perpendicular, I

play my part, and the heavy splash on one side and the thud on the other clearly states that two are down, one in the water and the other on shore. With such a finale, you cease, nor is it too soon, for I really believe that if you were to remain after the light had departed you might receive an injury, as the birds, no longer dreading a foe, rush about in such a reckless way, that I have felt quite a relief at getting out of the marsh, without a mallard flying at express speed, coming in contact with my body. On the night in question twenty-eight brace of ducks, two geese, and three brant was the bag—good sport, as all must agree, in two or three hours' shooting.

## RUFFED GROUSE.

(*Tetrao Umbellus.*)

I HAVE advocated the introduction of the American partridge, having perfect confidence in their being most suitable birds for naturalization, knowing them to be almost perfection in sporting qualities, and very superior as additions to the larder ; but with all my partiality for that little beauty, I will presume upon your good-nature by mentioning the claims of one of the grouse family, that equally deserves honourable notice and the attention of those persons who may be desirous of having here a greater variety of feathered game than at present is to be found. The ruffed grouse (*Tetrao umbellus*) must not, however, be confused with the pinnated grouse (*Tetrao cupido*), for although they have a great similarity in appearance and size, their modes of life and choice of quarters are totally different, the former being

found among timber or bush, or in its immediate vicinity, while the latter chooses the open grass-covered prairies, perching upon trees only when the winter is very severe and the ground covered with snow, and then making use of only such trees as are always to be found standing alone, and sparsely sprinkled along the margin of these immense western savannahs. Both these varieties are splendid birds, but the characteristics of the ruffed grouse make him much better adapted for a residence here, and so strongly am I disposed in their favour, that I believe if once introduced they would as soon as known outrival the pheasant in popularity, being a much hardier bird, swifter on the wing, disinclined to run before flushing, requiring the straightest aim to bring it to bag, nor are they much inferior to the Oriental favourite in beauty of plumage.

The ruffed grouse a little exceeds the red grouse of Scotland in size, being almost eighteen inches in length, is very handsome and upright in form, of a beautiful rich chestnut brown colour, variegated with grey and dark impressions and pen-

cillings on the back, breast, and neck. The tail is grey, with a black bar across it near its termination, and generally carried open like a fan. On the top of the head there is a slight crest, and down each side of the neck are curious fan-shaped tufts of glossy black velvet-looking feathers. In April these birds pair, but I should imagine from the seasons in the northern portion of the United States and Canada being more backward or later in this respect than ours, so if they were introduced here they probably would pair a month earlier. They lay from ten to sixteen eggs, their nest, which is a very primitive one, being generally secreted in bush or under the shelter of a fallen log. They are most affectionate parents, and use the same artifices as the wild duck to draw away intruders from the vicinity of their youthful progeny. This grouse has two distinct calls, one a soft mellow prolonged note, generally used in gathering up the covey after it has been broken ; the other an extraordinary drumming sound made by the cocks in the pairing season, and capable of



being heard a great distance in still weather. The latter noise is caused by the rapid vibration of the wings when the male is perched on a fallen tree or stump. Indiscriminately they live on a great variety of food—ants, grubs, elder-berries, wild cherries, and grain being their favourite diet.

Early in autumn, when the weather is fine, particularly in the morning and evening, they will be found in the open cultivation, more especially if there be rough ground and brush in the vicinity; but as severe weather approaches the woods will become their constant resort. In shooting the ruffed grouse great difficulty is ever experienced in marking them. Their flight, as I have previously said, is wonderfully rapid, and they have a method of doubling back in the reverse direction in which they started; however, as generally they do not go far (about three or four hundred yards), with patience and a selection of the nearest irregular ground which has young timber upon it, or the densest bush that is in the vicinity, a second opportunity will probably be again found of bringing more of the family to bag.

All over the United States and in portions of Upper Canada they are common, being generally known by the misnomers of partridges and pheasants. Where the country is wild and sparsely settled they are sometimes stupidly tame, almost permitting themselves to be knocked down with a stick. Frequently when trout fishing in the wilds of the State of Maine I have come suddenly upon them, then they would rise into the nearest tree, and remain with unconcern watching me, and, from evident curiosity, they would stretch their necks and get into all kinds of grotesque attitudes. So little would they then regard the report of a gun that I have known pot-hunters kill quite a number of the same family by always shooting the lowest birds first. But when the ruffed grouse becomes familiar with man they are perfectly cognisant of the danger of being in his proximity ; for although they lie close enough to shoot at, their colour harmonizes so well with that of the ground that it is next to impossible to see them before they are on the wing, when such is their impetuosity that the timid

nervous pottering shot, or the poacher who destroys game when at rest upon the ground with all his devices, would find it next to impossible to kill a single specimen.

In the undergrowth which springs up in those parts of the country where the timber has been destroyed by fire, especially in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, I found ruffed grouse very numerous, it being almost impossible to wander half a mile from camp or settlement without flushing a covey. Now the winters there are particularly long and rigorous, far exceeding in severity those of Scotland ; still, the bird's natural hardiness prevents it suffering. In the Alleghanies and all the southern ranges of hills of the United States it is also abundant, where, if the winters are less severe, the heat in summer is sometimes excessive, proving that the ruffed grouse is capable of enduring great varieties of climate. The palate of the most fastidious epicure cannot fail to be gratified with its appearance on the table, the flesh being extremely delicate, yet with a gamey flavour, I have eaten it cooked in every conceiv-

able manner, and whether it be simply roasted with a toasting fork over a camp fire or formed into a portion of an *omnium gatherum* stew, it will be found alike acceptable. Although scarcity of food may compel this grouse to change its home, still it is not migratory, as stated by some naturalists. This supposition has arisen from their being found in great numbers during summer and autumn on the scrub barren land, which they leave, for the shelter of the dense timber, as soon as the more severe weather commences. A family of these birds I was acquainted with for a year. On their range there was an abundance of food and water, and during that period I could always find them, their haunt being a little hilly island in the prairie, covered with timber and brush, and detached from any irregular land by several miles of grass.

Some authorities have placed woodcock shooting first in the list, and called it the fox-hunting of those pleasures in which the dog and gun form the chief accessories. As far as present British field sports are concerned, I believe they are correct, but should the ruffed grouse be introduced, and our

enthusiasts once experience the suddenness of their flush, the velocity and irregularity of their flight, the uncertainty of their movements, and the beauty and size of this game when bagged, they would assuredly insert a saving clause, or change their opinions *in toto*. Much as I have said in favour of the American partridge, with equal fervour I can advance the claims of the ruffed grouse ; still, they both are very different, but the nearest explanation I can at present think of is that the former is essentially adapted to the requirements of the veteran sportsman, while the pursuit of the latter will tax all the strength of limb and impetuous ardour of our younger men ; the one is game that will afford the most delightful pastime, similar to hare hunting with beagles, while the other will demand in its successful pursuit all the energy of the highly bred, dashing, courageous foxhound. I doubt not many, I believe all, of the warm admirers of shooting will agree with me that there is a superior pleasure in making a mixed bag, now a mallard, next a woodcock, perchance thirdly a partridge, and so forth—

loading your discharged barrel scarcely knowing at what description of game it will be used. Yes, truly, constant novelty and change is a great additional attraction even in field sports, and with our demesnes, parks, and forests inhabited by a goodly number of both these varieties, the ruffed grouse and American partridge, in addition to their present tenants, the cravings of the most insatiable ought to be satisfied ; and at a very trifling expense and trouble these introductions could be accomplished.

## CHINESE OYSTERS.

IN my wanderings about the Chinese coast in search of game I frequently came across immense banks of oysters, apparently no person's property ; and this is the more remarkable when we remember that there is probably no people on the face of the globe who have the same skill in rendering all descriptions of animal matter fit for table purposes as the Chinese. About thirty miles from Victoria, the capital of Hong Kong, on the route to the Canton River, is situated the entrance to a bay, which from the distance it runs inland is designated Deep Bay ; the northern shore is one continuous mud-bank, on the upper portion of which are to be found acres of oysters. My acquaintance with this fact is not likely to be forgotten. A friend and I had been shooting wildfowl from a boat ; a cripple



had given us a long chase towards shore, and after we had succeeded in capturing the bird, we found our return cut off, from the tide receding, and the sharp edges of the oyster shells become so close to the bottom of our gig, that had we persevered in forcing her out, we should soon have cut a hole in her planks. To get out but to wade was impossible, as shoe leather would never have stood the ordeal, therefore there was no alternative left but to remain till the rising tide would float us ; anything but a pleasing resource, when time was valuable and shooting at a premium. Slightly to console our wounded feelings, we attacked the oysters, which were excellent, and certainly demolished an immense quantity. Another time in a pheasant shooting trip to Meer's Bay, one of the minor inlets, where our lorcha was anchored, had its margin densely covered with oysters, and the natives did not make the slightest objection to our using as many as required. From this circumstance it may be presumed that they knew no marketable value for them, for if a Chinaman can have the slightest grounds for fabricating an excuse

for squeezing an Englishman, he is certain to do it. The only oysters that I have known exposed for sale in Hong Kong, were only in very small quantities, although they are readily purchased by the Europeans, are from Amoy, and they are really excellent, for from appearance and flavour they can favourably compare with those of Colchester. For some years the resident merchants of Hong Kong have been aware of the fact, and like Shanghai mutton and game, the representatives of headquarters at the port of Amoy annually send propitiatory offerings of their delicate shell-fish to their superiors. Some time since I was informed that a considerable shipment of oysters was about to take place, with the intention of making an effort to furnish Australia and New Zealand with this luxury. Now instead of taking them from home, if the coast of China were selected, the probabilities of success in my opinion would be much greater, for the transportation distance can scarcely be over one-fourth of the voyage to Europe, and moreover, in favourable seasons anything but a stormy passage might be anticipated, a circum-

stance not without considerable importance, for it is well known that the oyster can support itself a long time out of water on its own juice. If this hint should be adopted, then I have neither wasted the ink and paper with which this is indited, nor my time in giving my readers the information that oysters are to be obtained in the Celestial Empire.

## CUTTLE-FISH.

THERE are very few inhabitants of the ocean which have so extensive a range of residence as the cuttle-fish. In the Atlantic or Pacific it is equally at home, and in the western end of the Mediterranean it abounds. Wondrous stories are told of its savage proclivities, and in a shop in China I saw a picture in which one of this family was represented embracing a junk (which, judging from the size of the figures on board, must have been two or three hundred tons) and quietly helping itself to mariners, as appetite dictated. Why the celestials did not get under the hatches I am unable to comprehend. That some of this species grow to an immense size there is no doubt, as the whale is often found to contain dismembered arms and other parts of this their favourite food, which

must originally have been component parts of monsters of gigantic proportions. To their belligerent disposition I can attest, for well I remember seeing one about five feet across, attempting to seize a retriever that was paddling in the shallow water at the head of Rosia Bay, Gibraltar. During my stay in that garrison, there resided a señorita, who from her graceful carriage and pretty feet never failed to attract attention; but she always wore her mantilla so disposed that her face could not be seen. Curiosity induced me to inquire the reason from one of her acquaintances, when I was informed that while bathing she had been seized by a cuttle-fish across the face, and that, ever since, an unsightly mark, where the blood had been drawn to the surface, remained. The cuttle-fish although most repulsive to look at, is much prized on the coast of Spain as an article of food; they are frequently taken on the hook, but more generally caught among the rocks in shallow water with a gaff. A number of such in a boat doubtless would be considered unpleasant companions, for when out of the water they can move with facility;

however, this is not so with the captives, for the fisherman immediately on bringing them to the surface, with his hands turns the globe which forms the body inside out, thereby destroying all power of suction. This is easily done, for there is an orifice on one side which the fingers can be forced into, and unless the fish should be of unusual size, no difficulty is experienced in so placing him *hors de combat*. I have often eaten them ; their flesh when properly cooked being excellent ; the best mode of preparing them, according to my taste, is the following : first cleanse thoroughly by scalding, then rub body and legs with garlic ; afterwards cut the whole into small pieces, which fry in olive oil, one or two fresh plucked Chili peppers being introduced for seasoning.

## THE SNIPE OF AMERICA.

(*Gallinago Wilsonii*.)

I NEVER met a good shot who was not partial to snipe shooting ; whether I am a good shot or not does not matter, but of all pleasures there are few I so thoroughly enjoy as a day among the long bills. In the different portions of the globe that fate or luck has knocked me about, I have always been able to find snipe ; so I am inclined to believe that there is no family more generally and universally distributed. But the prairies of Western America far outdo all others in the abundance of this description of feathered game. *Gallinago Wilsonii* is truly a splendid bird, so nearly similar to our own home beauty, that the skilful naturalist is alone able to distinguish the one from the other. In habits, flight, and even



call, they are essentially similar. How my heart warmed the first day I shot them, for the familiar cry that each bird uttered on being flushed, transported me back to days long gone by, to the society of old companions long under the sod, and a happy circle of relations, to whom it was ever my delight to exhibit the proofs of my skill.

The Wilson snipe—for by this name it is familiarly known all over the American continent—spends the winter months in the Southern States, principally in those that border the Gulf of Mexico; but as spring advances, they follow up northward the line of debarcation between frost and thaw, ultimately arriving in that boundless expanse which stretches northwards from the Great Lakes to the Arctic Ocean. Up in this remote haunt is their principal breeding ground, although occasionally a nest may be found much further to the south; but in all instances of such that I have been able to find, I have been induced to believe that either the male or the female bird had met with an accident, preventing it following the

migration of its companions. What a beautiful lesson all may learn from this; how it should speak home to the human heart, this attachment of the mate, who, sooner than desert a companion, forsakes for the time being his whole race, save one, and foregoes even following the journey dictated by the requirements of nature.

In Southern Illinois, where I had the greatest amount of experience in killing this game, the advance heralds of migration generally arrived about the 10th of March. Much, of course, depended whether the winter was late or otherwise; but if a thaw had taken place, and a moist southerly wind had been blowing over-night, the ground that yesterday you had tramped over in pursuit of wild duck without seeing a single snipe, on the morrow would harbour thousands. Their journey being a continuation of short flights, they are seldom out of condition on arrival; and as they do not take up a permanent residence, little compunction is felt in shooting them. Out of the large number that I have brought to bag in spring, I do not remember a single instance of an egg, or

other indication that pairing had taken place. The prairies of this State (Illinois) are generally burned late in the fall, or early in spring, to improve the succeeding year's grazing, leaving the surface of the soil entirely denuded of grass, except where moisture has prevented the firing taking effect. Over this, especially in the vicinity of sloughs, dwarf prissimon bushes abound, and there the snipe most frequent. A dog is not necessary here, for the game is so abundant, unless, perhaps a good retriever, who must be under such control as never to attempt to leave heel, except when ordered by his master to recover a cripple. A further attraction to this sport, beyond the numbers that can be killed, is that few days pass on which numbers of teal, pin-tailed duck, or mallard do not assist to swell the size of your game bag. From the advent of the first flight until the middle of May additional arrivals take place, but after that date all disappear till the fall of the leaf, and gusty changeable weather foretells the near approach of winter. But the autumnal flight is never numerically equal to that of spring; still, if twenty brace will satisfy

the sportsman, he can have that reward for his labour, provided he be a fair shot.

In America are to be found many excellent shots. By them the arrival of the snipe is looked forward to with much pleasure ; but to the pot-hunter, the fellow who will shoot pinnated grouse on the ground, the duck upon the water, or crawl all day through brush to have a standing chance at a wild turkey, this branch of shooting presents little attraction. How satisfactory it is that there is at least one game bird who can laugh with derision at such pursuers. At first, when the snipe makes its appearance, especially if the weather be wet and blustering, they are inclined to be wild ; but much depends upon the amount of cover, and consequently shelter, afforded by the locality, but when the genial sun of spring shines with invigorating warmth, they will frequently lie so close that many will flush almost at your feet. When wild, their flights are long and rapid ; when not so, they droop their wings, and frequently alight before a hundred yards have been traversed. However, this does not apply to the whole day,

for towards sunset, possibly from having by that time digested their last night's meal—for they feed principally by night—they invariably become wild, and more difficult of access. To be successful in making a heavy bag of snipe, there is a rule which may be beneficial to the tyro to remember, viz. always to hunt down wind, or as much so as possible, provided always dogs are not used. The stronger the breeze the more necessity for doing so ; the reason being, that invariably snipe fly against the wind, and being flushed by your advancing on them from windward, the birds will circle round to the right and left, and present an easy cross shot, in their determination to pursue the desired direction.

The migration of this snipe, as well as of the American woodcock, is peculiar ; as all appear to act independently of the other. Dozens may be seen to pass or alight near you in the space of a few minutes, yet each bird is alone. Many an evening, after sunset, have I watched their coming, yet never saw two or more together. As a rule, these journeys by both the above-mentioned take place

before sunrise and after sunset. This scattered mode of travelling, and the hour at which it takes place, are doubtless the reasons that none but close observers of nature observe their methods. By the end of May the migration of the snipe has ceased, and their summer quarters are reached, which are, as previously stated, principally north of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence; although not a few spend the summer in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Maine. Early in June they commence laying their eggs, four in number, in a nest of the most primitive construction, it being simply an indentation in some trifling excrescence of the surface. The eggs, which are of a yellowish brown colour, blotched with dark markings, taper very much towards the small end; they are always placed in the nest with the larger end outwards. As soon as the young are hatched they leave the nest, and in six weeks afterwards are almost full grown. At this age it is impossible to tell the Wilson snipe from our home variety; however, at any period the difference is very slight; and they are quite as strong, swift, and

erratic in their flight. Moreover, they are to be found on the prairies in immense quantities, ten or twelve dozen per day being no unusual bag in March, so those who can spare time and money would, if fond of this description of shooting, find ample recompense by a visit to the haunts of this game across the Atlantic.



## A BIG BUCK.

IN the autumn of 18—, when travelling across the Grand Prairie, I got caught in the first snowstorm of the season. The vicinity was but sparsely settled, and from the thickness of the drift our charioteer lost his way, and after getting mired times without number, and enduring one of the most disagreeable nights out of doors it is possible to imagine, we reached the village of K—. Under ordinary circumstances it would have presented no great inducements, but the large wood fire that blazed in the bar room of the diminutive tavern, after our protracted night of hardship, possessed such attractions that I determined to lay over for a couple of days. On the following evening I learned that the neighbourhood was well stocked with game from the *habitués* who made this public

house their place of rendezvous after the toils of the day. No small portion of the conversation was in reference to a buck, who for years had constantly been seen, yet none of the heretofore successful hunters had been able to circumvent him. It was evident that this animal was of no ordinary size, as he was dubbed by all with the *sobriquet* of the big buck, and one regular old leather-stocking, whose opinion was always listened to with the reverence due to an authority, ventured to assert that he believed the bullet would never be moulded that would tumble him (the buck) in his tracks. This extraordinary deer had almost escaped my memory, and I was resting over my next morning's pipe, and beginning to fear that my visit was longer than necessary, for there was absolutely nothing to do but eat and sleep, unless the prices of pork, corn, or wheat had possessed an interest, when a man from the timber land arrived with a load of wood, and held the following conversation with the mixer of mint juleps, cock-tails, etc. :—"Abe, have you e'er a shooting-iron that you can loan this 'coon'?"

Abe having replied in the negative, and inquired the reason, was told that the most alfiestest big buck had crossed the road about a mile off, and gone into the Squire's corn.<sup>1</sup> Quietly going to my bed-room, I unpacked my heaviest gun, a ten bore, in which I have particular faith, and having noted the route that the teamster had come by, I followed the back track of his sled, and true enough found the prints of a very heavy buck. The day was still young, myself in good walking trim, and with an internal determination not to be beaten, except night overtook me, and very probably with the hope to show the neighbours that a Britisher was good for some purposes, I followed the track with unusually willing steps and light heart. To get into the corn-field the buck had jumped the snake fence and afterwards doubled back, and as the wind did not suit for me to enter at the same place, I made a considerable *détour*. In my right barrel I had sixteen buck shot, about the size that would run one hundred

<sup>1</sup> Every person in Western America is either Squire or Colonel.

to the pound, and a bullet in the left. As the corn had not yet been gathered, and the undergrowth of cuckle burs and other weeds was tolerably dense, I had little doubt but that I would get sufficiently close to make use of the former charge. An old stager like my quarry I knew from experience would be desperately sharp, so with the utmost caution I advanced up wind, eyes and ears strained to the utmost tension. I had only got about a fourth of the field traversed, when I heard some voices right to windward encouraging a dog to hold a pig. The noise of the men, dog, and porker, I concluded, would start the game off in the reverse direction, so hurriedly retracing my steps, I regained the fence, got over it, and took my stand at an angle that stretched close to a slough which was densely covered with a growth of various water plants and rushes. In about five minutes after obtaining my position, I was greeted by a sight of the beauty, who hopped the fence where there was a broken rail, and gaining the opening. For a moment he halted, then tossing up his head, offered me a fair cross shot at nearly

eighty yards distance. Pitching my gun forward, I pulled the trigger, and well I knew not fruitlessly, for he gave a short protracted jump, dropped his white tail close into his hams, and with an increased pace disappeared in the swamp.

Unless the wound was mortal, or so severe as to seriously incommode him, I was certain he would not be satisfied to remain in such close propinquity to danger, so after reloading I made a *détour* to find where he had left this cover to seek one more retired. My conjecture was correct, for after travelling nearly half a mile I found the familiar tell-tale track. The snow was in pretty good order, both for tracking and walking, and I did not let the grass grow under my feet. As yet I had seen no signs of blood, which the more thoroughly impressed me that my lead had made more than a skin wound. In about an hour I found myself on the edge of another slough, which I was hesitating whether to enter or go round, when I espied my friend, some way beyond range, going over a neighbouring swell of the prairie. Of course I cut off the angle and cast

forward to where the view was obtained, and as I crested the rising ground, in the distance I saw my friend at a stand-still, evidently anxiously scrutinizing his surroundings. My cap was of a very light colour, so I concluded that he did not see me, and my supposition was again correct, for after a few minutes he relaxed his pace, and turning at right angles, walked into a small expanse of dense rushes, interspersed with an occasional stunted willow. In deer-shooting, if you suppose an animal severely wounded, never hurry him ; if he once lies down, and you give him time to stiffen, you will not have half the trouble in his ultimate capture that you would have by constantly keeping him on the move. So I practised in this instance ; carefully for ten or fifteen minutes I watched that he did not leave the cover ; then having concluded that he had lain down, I quietly lit my pipe and dawdled away an hour more. Deeming that I had granted sufficient law, I renewed operations and pushed forward ; the track was very irregular in length of pace from where he had reduced his gait to a walk, and several

times from want of lifting his feet high enough he had scuffed the surface of the snow with his toes. An old deer-stalker will know these symptoms, a young one may without harm remember them. Having cautiously followed the trail three parts of the way across the cover, and almost commencing to think I would have done better by waiting half an hour longer, the buck jumped up within twenty yards, and headed straight from me, when I gave him the contents a second time of the right-hand barrel in the back of his head.

The distance was too great to remove my prize home that day, so cutting a branch off a willow, I affixed my handkerchief to it, and left this banner waving to denote possession, also to furnish a hint to the prairie wolves that they had better steer clear. That night at the tavern bar in the most ostentatious manner, in presence of the assembled crowd, I ordered a team to be got ready in the morning to bring in the big buck; old leather-stocking *sotto voce*, remarking that I had not been reared on the right soil to be able to come that game. However, when I arrived with my trophy, the



crowd congratulated me, while leather-stocking remarked that he knew not what the world was coming to, by G—d, when a Britisher, with a bird gun could kill the biggest buck in the state. In conclusion, I would say that in skinning we found that at the first shot one grain had gone through the lungs, while two more had lodged further back. The gross weight of this deer was one hundred and eighty-four pounds.

## BLACK BASS.

*Perka tabrax. (Dekalb.)*

IN advocating the introduction of American Salmonidæ, I feel I have not yet performed my work ; bear with me further, and grant me space to advocate the cause of another stranger that in my opinion deserves the favourable attention of all admirers of the gentle art. Although I love the dog and gun, still I am equally devoted to the rod. Every season has its beauties and its fascinations, and so has every variety of field sports. On a glorious September day, what can exceed the pleasure of following a brace of well-trained, well-bred, high-couraged dogs over the golden stubbles ? On a mild spring morning, with a soft south-west breeze and dark clouds overhead, can anything be more delightful than following the tortuous course of a trout brook, taking from pool

or stream the speckled beauties, or knee-deep in a rapid, boisterous river, first rising, now hooking, and perchance killing, the glorious salmon ? The whirr of pheasant or partridge is pleasant music ; the voice of hounds is not less so ; but the screech of your reel, when first you are fast to a heavy game fish, is a song that even Patti herself cannot rival. For a fish to be popular among fishermen, it must have three requisites, viz. gameness when hooked, boldness in feeding, and, when it has yielded its life, be a fit feast for an *epicure*. All these requisites I claim for the black bass ; and, therefore, presume to advocate his claims for introduction] to our numerous disciples of Izaak Walton. There is no section of the world so intersected by rivers and lakes as the North American continent, and in nearly all these, from northern Canada to the tributaries of the Mississippi, from the Atlantic sea-board to the Missouri river, the black bass is to be found. It matters not whether it be stream or lake ; whether the water be clear or muddy, stagnant or rapid ; in all it appears equally to flourish. What splendid

homes could we offer it in the British Isles ! All our ornamental waters, though generally unsuited to trout, would be retreats eminently fitted to its nature ; and the fishermen, instead of capturing such common pluckless fish as bream, tench, carp, or roach, would have an antagonist that would test all their skill, the stoutness and endurance of their tackle, by that untiring, unflinching resolution and headstrong energy which no other fresh-water fish of the same size possesses.

The black bass is an extremely free feeder, and is caught in all the various ways used to capture trout. It rises freely at the fly ; with minnow or worm, crawfish, spoon bait, or almost any artificial device, it can be taken. On being hooked, generally the first effort it makes for freedom is to spring from the water. Look out, Mr. Angler ; dip your rod in courtesy to him, for if you neglect the requisite *salam*, your acquaintance will probably terminate. When this device has failed, with a purpose and force alike surprising, it makes a rush for distant parts, and not until every effort, every trick is put in practice, that is known to

the fish family, can you get the slightest chance to use your landing net. I have frequently, after a long and fierce struggle, been about to place the net under a captive, but the movement was enough; though apparently exhausted, the fish took a new lease of life, and a further trial of patience was demanded before I could call the prize mine. In shape the black bass much resembles a well-fed trout; but is deeper, and thicker made, while the tail is remarkable for its breadth. Their weight varies from 1lb. to 5lb.; yet, on the Niagara river, near the village of Chip-pawa, I captured a splendid fellow quite 8lb.; but I was then assured that I had reason to congratulate myself, for fish of such a size were far from common. The colour, as in all varieties of fish, varies much. In clear running water they are generally a very dark green upon the back (much such a shade as the darker hues in mackerel), gradually getting lighter, almost to white, as you approach the abdomen; but in those southern waters, which are strongly impregnated with alluvial deposit, and consequently turbid, the back

of these bass are less brilliant in shade, while the stomach is not so near to white. A still further advantage that may recommend them is, that they are in season when trout should not be killed. In spring they spawn, the exact time varying in different waters on account of season and position as to latitude.

If I may judge from the quantity of spawn the female contains they must be immensely prolific; for although the individual ovum is small, the roe is very large in proportion to the bulk of the fish. From my own observation and inquiries, I believe that the spawn is from sixteen to twenty days in maturing after being deposited, which would give ample time for its transportation across the Atlantic. I am further of opinion that, indiscriminately, the aquatic vegetation produced upon a gravel or soil bottom is selected to which to attach the eggs; for many of the rivers and ponds in which I have captured this bass flowed through, or were situated in deep bottom lands, where a stone, even as large as a pebble, would be difficult to find. One pond in Southern

Illinois I particularly remember ; it covered a space of about thirty acres, with an average depth of about three feet, except in the southern extremity, where about eight feet of water could be found. The bottom was entirely composed of mud, and was margined with brush ; yet this pond swarmed with black bass. Lake Champlain, the St. Lawrence, and Lake Ontario (all who have visited these regions will remember) are remarkably clear, with gravelly or rocky bottoms, and each is a favourite haunt of this fish. I mention this to prove the better how universal a favourite and extensive his adoption might become.

A friend, once a resident of the Isle of Skye, and a well-known successful trout and salmon fisherman, had a beautiful little lake, about ten acres in extent, on his estate, not many miles from Toronto, which he had stocked with black bass. In a few years their numbers so much increased, that in an hour or two, trolling of an evening, a dozen or more could easily be taken. This lake had neither outlet nor inlet, but was supplied with water from springs in the bottom.



I fear it will be almost deemed heresy to place this fish on a par with the trout ; at least, some such idea I had when I first heard the two compared ; but I am bold, and will go further. I consider it is the superior of the two, for it is equally good as an article of food, and much stronger and more untiring in its efforts to escape when hooked.

By all means let us have black bass introduced. The upper reaches of the Thames are admirably suited for its habitat, as I feel confident this fish requires but to be known to be most highly appreciated.

## HINTS TO YOUNG ANGLERS.

I CANNOT hope to teach the expert, but I doubt not that there are many of the younger readers of this little work who may be assisted in taking a larger basket of fish than they otherwise would, by a knowledge of the following artifices, which I have often found most successful. In a clear warm day at the termination of the green drake season, when the trout cannot be induced to rise at the artificial fly, I have frequently been most successful by practising the following *ruse*, viz. having only a trail fly on your casting-line (which should be very long and light), make it slightly fast to a water-lily or other leaf; having marked where a fish is feeding, go up stream well above the place, and guide through means of your rod

the leaf, so that it will pass close by the spot, taking the precaution of using a long line, and keeping as much out of sight as possible ; when the leaf has reached the trout's haunt, by a slight strike disengage your fly from the leaf, so that it will drop in the water, and but seldom will the fish hesitate to rise at it, and on such occasions will yourself fail to strike successfully. Now for hint number two ; when I have been unable to get a strike when minnow fishing, I have stimulated the trout's appetite by taking a worm and hooking it transversely across the centre, so that when your minnow is put on, both sides of the worm hang on either side of its head. If fish reason, I suppose they thus argue : That fellow is going off with a prize ; if he was not in good health, he would scarcely have such a voracious appetite. It's evident Master Fisherman has played no tricks on this chap. So at him the bass or trout goes, and tyro's basket becomes heavier by another prize. Not to keenness but to accident I made this discovery. I had fished most unsuccessfully for several hours, having changed from worm to minnow and *vice*

*versâ* ; in one of these alterations, being careless from want of success, some worm was left on the shank of the hook after I reverted to the minnow ; the hint was not lost, and soon afterwards practised, and always with most successful results.

## THE AMERICAN THOROUGHBRED.

I THINK that few will disagree with me that horse-racing was established not alone for the amusement it affords, but to encourage breeding a superior stamp of animal, alike capable of speed and endurance ; in fact, animals alike suited for public requirements and the wants of our army. Of late years speed alone appears to be the desideratum, and to so great a pitch has it come through light weights, short races, etc., that the most useless, as far as utility purposes may be considered, are patronized for sires. The result is, what would have been deemed a racehorse half a century ago is now thought a hunter at best, while what our fathers would have condemned as a weedy tucked-up brute, we, with our advanced views of civilization, call a racehorse. Speed for a short distance is what all harp

after, and if stamina with speed cannot be obtained, the more useful quality is neglected, or entirely sacrificed, to gain a few seconds less time in a mile race. Double the length of the race—make the course two miles instead of one—and which would be first at the winning-post?—or, still better, make the race three miles, and I much doubt if the weed would come home at all, leave alone save his distance.

Much injury is doubtless done our horses by running them long before they reach maturity. If you take a growing boy and overtax his strength, what will be the result? A wreck before he reaches manhood. So it is with our thoroughbred colts and fillies. They are forced forward like hot-house plants, prematurely reach maturity of form, when they are put to work trying even to aged animals, their muscular development being still soft and unset, and consequently unequal to the task, frequently causing a broken-down cripple at the very time when, if permitted to have followed Nature's dictates, the poor creature would have rejoiced in all the perfections of beauty that charm the eye

and tell of power and endurance. What an everyday occurrence it is to hear of such and such a colt, immense favourites with the public from their success as two-year-olds, being scratched ! And why ? In some closely-contested struggle, when flesh and blood was doing its utmost, under whip and spur, a yet further exertion was called for, and from the effort a strain or injury was received which time ultimately developed ; and thus the flower of the stable, the hope of the owner, is thrown out of work, ultimately to descend through the gradations of pampered pet to over-wrought cab horse. True, it is not unfrequently the lot of man to undergo the same vicissitudes of fortune ; but he invariably has some hand in altering his position. But the poor horse earns degradation through his endeavour to serve too well a selfish master.

The Americans are justly considered close observers and an essentially practical people, possessed of energy which has long characterized this their mother people. From being originally thrown in a new land, where every effort and resource had to be employed to raise them to the



standard of older countries, constant attention to all the details of life was required through numerous generations, and has made them what they are, inferior to none, and far, far ahead of many European nations who can date their existence back numerous centuries. At an early age the inherent love of Englishmen for horse-racing showed itself in America ; and as might be expected, when the importation of thoroughbred stock took place, much judgment was employed that the best animals that could be obtained in England were only introduced. Unfortunately, however, racing got into bad repute, from the number of *mauvais sujets* it attracted ; and although Southern gentlemen did their utmost to cleanse away the stain, the fanatical puritanical spirit of many Northern states for years tabooed the institution ; thus racing had only a partial existence, and fewer horses were imported, and those always for a time to the South ; but if the number was small, the selections were the more carefully made. However, again a revival of racing took place, principally at first through the instrumentality

of the late Mr. Atchison Alexander, of Woodford Kentucky ; afterwards through the support of Mr. Jerome, of New York, and Mr. Auguste Belmont, the Rothschilds' representative in the same city ; so that at the present date almost every state boasts one or two race-courses, where as fine racing can be enjoyed as at home. From an innate love of the horse, I not only visited the majority of the American races, but obtained the *entrée* to many of the training and breeding establishments ; thus gaining opportunities of forming opinions that defective judgment alone would cause to be incorrect. One only of these establishments will I mention, because I was more conversant with it, not because it was either the largest or most replete with conveniences—that of Mr. Sanford, in New Jersey, about thirty miles from the metropolis. This gentleman had a large number of all ages at work, all his own, for he was not a public trainer, but a person of affluence, loving the horse for his beauty and use, and running them with the hope that if they were entitled to the laurels they would bear them. In close proximity to his stables was his private training ground, and the buildings were replete

with every convenience that ingenuity, art, or money could supply. In looking over his pets, numerous descendants of *imp.* Hedgeford, Glencoe, Knight of St. George, &c., were found, all good ones, as some old memories will recall, and closely allied to the American-bred cracks, Lexington, Boston, Kentucky, Irrequois, etc. One thing that cannot fail to strike the English visitors is the much greater amount of stamina that all appear to possess over our home-bred animal; and I am inclined to believe that this is not alone show. I am aware that an English nobleman, probably the most successful of modern times on the turf, thought the same, and in consequence introduced a stallion. However, the importation did not turn out a success; but might the horse not have been injured in the voyage, or the purchaser been wrong in his selection? To successfully clear a rasper, there is nothing like going boldly at it; so, without further preamble, I believe that the introduction of good American thoroughbred stallions would be beneficial to those who want to breed weight-carrying, fast, lasting horses.

Three miles is no unfrequent distance for a race to be run across the Atlantic, and it has always struck me how wonderfully game all appeared to finish, something like the Irishman's car-horse, a spurt always remaining "to take your honour to the hall door."

The Americans run their youngsters in their two-year-old form, but the weights they carry are very light, the distances short, and the ordeal seldom required oftener than three or four times in a season ; therefore the occasion of accident that our colts of the same age suffer from, is materially reduced ; in fact, if scratching in the United States was as frequent as here, where the number of entries does not exceed one-fourth of ours, they would have few or no horses to show at the post.

For three and four year olds, the old system of heats <sup>1</sup> was much in vogue ; at one time no bad one, let me say, for proving endurance ; and here again I was much struck with the gameness with which the contestants always reassembled. At Seacaucus,

<sup>1</sup> Heat races are now much reduced in number, happily so, for more mature years has taught me that such ordeals are unnecessarily severe.

near New York, there was a bis-annual meeting ; the establishment was superintended by a most hospitable, kind-hearted old Virginian, whose heart was in his work. I attended one of the meetings in which a son of Knight of St. George won a heat race ; it was so closely contested, and so gamely finished, that it even now warms my blood while I write of it. The winner was a dark bay, wonderfully compact in build, with a few grey hairs at the setting on of the tail, so common a mark of many of his family. What a charger, I thought to myself, he would make ; nor do I believe I was far wrong. That day this horse proved himself a good one at long distances, and in heats, but he has also made his mile in one minute and forty-six seconds—reliable time. Now, this horse, Knight-hood by name, if I remember correctly, had not been galloped off his feet when a two-year-old, or he never could have undergone successfully the trial he endured on the occasion mentioned. At Paterson, New Jersey, I witnessed another closely contested heat race ; the winner was a mare of Mr. Sanford's, called Nanny Butler ; she was an

uncommonly well put together, undersized nag, but with the most unsightly height of withers; five heats had to be run before the race was decided. The mare was ridden by a well-known veteran jockey, black as my hat; his reputation was great, and that day proved not without reason; still a good jockey can't land a bad mount first, although a good jockey can materially assist a good horse. At the start the odds were heavy against the mare, and when she was declared winner, not the mare, but the rider, got the credit from the shrewd public. Why not have divided the praise? But such is too frequently the way of the world. Now, if Nanny had been run to death—or I will say had done the work of Achievement in her two-year-old form—is it reasonable to suppose that she would have gamely and uninjured finished as winner the last and fifth heat of a two-mile heat race?

I was in New York when the beautiful Jerome Park race-course was opened. Kentucky was then the acknowledged crack of Eastern stables, but away south of the Ohio river was his half-brother, both being sons of the famous Lexington.

Wonderful rumours had reached the Atlantic seaboard of what the Western representative could do. For a long time it was doubtful whether this great gun would put in an appearance. So Kentucky was backed at immense odds for the great event—the Inauguration Stakes. At length a telegram arrived, announcing the intention of Mr. Alexander to forward his horse Asteroid. Public opinion became divided, but, as is generally the case, drifted back to the home favourite. Asteroid arrived a few days before the meeting, but unfortunately broke down ; however, I availed myself of an opportunity to inspect him, and such a horse I have seldom looked at—a hunter up to fourteen stone across any country—yet there was not a single gross point about him. To what his mishap could be attributed, few could say ; but I learned that, for an American horse, he had done an unusual amount of work in his younger days.

Kentucky, the most successful, and possibly the best horse that up to a certain date had been produced in America in modern days, although differing in colour, is very much like Blair Athole



in form, very showy and corky in action, and of most desirable temper. He has, I believe, only once been beaten, and then by Norfolk, a half-brother, who was shortly afterwards transported to the Pacific slope ; however, this defeat was to be attributed to (as I have been informed by a most reliable person) his being out of condition. He is also a son of Lexington, and therefore claims relationship to Boston and *imp.* Glencoe, ancestors to whom he truly does no discredit. I have seen Kentucky run several times, but always was he so immensely superior to his antagonists that the race was quite one-sided. At Saratoga, I believe, on one occasion, he was so hard pressed that his jockey spurred him, but I much doubt if such was necessary.

Lexington I have frequently mentioned ; I much regret that I forget his genealogical tree. As a sire and racehorse, his superior in the Western hemisphere was never produced. One performance was his running at Metairie course, New Orleans, a four-mile race against time, which he made in 7 minutes 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  seconds—a performance his owner

might well be proud of, for I can find no record of its being excelled ; and it must be remembered that American time is always correctly taken by reliable persons, and published at the end of each heat or race. Lexington died at a mature age, and is the sire of a numerous progeny, many of whom I know, and all, except one who shall be nameless, are not only fast, but enduring horses.

In conclusion, whether the American thoroughbred is as fast as ours would be difficult to decide ; but that he is a most lasting, enduring, game horse, I can assert, a proof that the Americans have not forgotten, in the universal mania of the age for fastness, the desideratum endurance—the *sine quâ non* for utility.

## HOW TO CAPTURE GREY MULLET.

OFTEN I have stood on the fluvial portion of a river and watched the grey mullet freely sporting on the surface. Numerous were the efforts I made to catch these wily gentry with hook and line ; but all overtures were rejected, and the fish preferred declining the bait to leaving their element. The grey mullet feeds principally on the surface, more particularly in warm weather, and as they are remarkably shy and gifted with but small mouths, with a preference to sucking in the bait, to freely swallowing it like trout or others, the difficulties in the way of capturing them are obvious, and hence I will explain a method some might call poaching, but really no more so than trimmer fishing ; in truth, it is much more excusable, for by the latter you capture fish that freely take the hook, while,

on the other hand, you ensnare rogues that all your skill and patience will fail otherwise to bag. Obtain a piece of flat cork about one inch in depth and the size of a regular ship biscuit; have a pouch made of coarse gauze, in which a slice of bread the size of the cork can be placed, the gauze retaining the bread flat against the cork. From the margin of the cork suspend around the bread a dozen hooks, about the size of those usually employed in trout bait fishing, these hooks to be tied on strong gut, six inches long, and on the points of a few of them a small dice of bread should be placed. Armed with half-a-dozen of these infernal machines, and provided with a landing net, go in your boat above where the mullet are known to resort, drop your corks in the water, about eight or ten yards apart, scattering some crumbs among them, and let the tide or current float them to the fish, keeping the boat a good way in the rear. Don't be in a hurry, the fish will not keep you long waiting; each float will soon be surrounded, and when the mullet find that they cannot carry away the bread wholesale, they will

knock the floats with their noses, slap them with their tails, and in a few seconds you will have a prize on each trimmer, hooked by back, tail, or side. If the captives run large much sport will be enjoyed in retaking your floats, for it is wonderful how long a four or five pound fish will manage to avoid you. This method I have practised often at Gibraltar, both in smooth and rough water, and never without meeting with the greatest success.

## THE PINNATED GROUSE.

(*Tetrao Cupido.*)

THE first pheasant I killed in China I thought the noblest game bird that I had ever pulled a trigger upon, and truly he was a beauty ; the plumage was in the most perfect state—the neck of the greenest emerald, the ring of the purest white, the tail the longest, and the different shades and tints of wings and body the very brightest I had ever seen in one of its species ; moreover, it weighed nearly one half more than any of the same family that I had killed at home, and to add additional appreciation, the shot that brought him to the ground was a difficult one and at long range. For years the pheasant of the southern portion of China reigned paramount in my opinion ; but a change has come over my ideas, and now superlative before all others I place two varieties of American game birds. What days of

pleasure have I in the pursuit of Pinnated grouse ; what splendid bags have I made of them, and on such ground as gave my darling companion setters the very best opportunities of showing their sagacity and careful education to the greatest advantage. In my previous notice of the ruffed grouse (*Tetrao umbellus*) I have stated that I do not believe this bird (the Pinnated grouse) so worthy of acclimatization as the last mentioned ; and why ? in his late autumnal flights he disregards distance ; and therefore where shooting ranges are limited by bounds, unless the proprietors on every side would mutually agree for their protection, I fear that the labours of one landowner in introducing and propagating them would be fraught with dissatisfaction, as his neighbours would enjoy almost as much as himself the benefit of his expense and trouble. But for all that Pinnated grouse are most worthy of our attention ; they are truly most noble birds, and afford the sportsman the best of sport, till the cold winds preceding winter cause them to pack, in the same manner as our red and black game, when their wariness



becomes so great that naught but quick shooting and heavy loaded cartridges are likely to help the labourer to produce a bag remunerative for his toil. That this bird could be acclimated here there is no doubt, for it is capable of withstanding great changes of temperature ; is not particular as to choice of ground as long as it is open, and plenty of grain and grass seed can be obtained. Although its range now is principally confined to the prairie country of the United States, not existing in great numbers till the edge of the Grand Prairie is reached, still formerly it was found equally abundant all over the open lands ; still, however, I believe Long Island and the island of Martha's Vineyard possess, or lately did, some remnants who long since would have disappeared but for the protection and care of the landowners in those places who have endeavoured to prevent if possible the extinction of this valuable bird upon their estates. I cannot well imagine any place so bleak in winter as the scrub uplands of the two aforementioned islands, unless perhaps Mull and Jura on our Scotch coast. The bird that could with impunity withstand the

rigours of the cold in the former could doubtless with impunity do the same in the latter. The Pinnated grouse pairs in March, and generally produces from twelve to fourteen young at a brood ; the chicks very early take to the wing, but their flight is weak and short until they are more than half grown. During the infancy of the family the courage and artifice of the parent bird to intimidate or draw off intruders is worthy of notice. At first she will fly towards you as if intent on giving you battle, but when this course has failed, she will retire, droop her wings, struggle on the ground, only just keeping beyond your grasp, always moving in a contrary direction to where her brood are hid, until parent instinct tells her that the children are safe, when suddenly on strong wings she will start for a distant flight. The facility with which the young secrete themselves is most surprising. Frequently have I got unexpectedly into the centre of a family, when up they rise like a flight of bees and as rapidly drop again ; certainly you see the exact spot on which they have alighted—that tuft of grass you believe

most surely contains one, but search as you will, turn over carefully every blade, look about the roots—all is useless, for no fledgeling will you find.

At the commencement of the pairing season, particularly if the weather is calm and cloudy, the male birds will be heard calling all day ; their note resembling the lowing of a cow, which can be heard distinctly for over a mile. At this time fierce-looking encounters appear to take place among the cocks, but I am inclined to believe that their fights are all a sham, performed to show themselves to the greatest advantage before the admiring ladies who assemble around ; for I have never been able to find a maimed hero, and seldom more than a broken feather resulting from the contest. As the spring advances they restrict their calling to evening and morning, and by the time the brood is hatched, cease it altogether. The peculiarity of the call of the males of this species is such that once heard it is difficult to forget, particularly when softened by distance ; it is produced by forcing air out of two orange-coloured receptacles placed on either

side of the throat, and which, when inflated, are as large in circumference as a man's finger, perfectly free from feathers upon their surface, but hid when in a state of quiescence by fan-shaped bunches of hackles that completely cover them.<sup>1</sup>

The Pinnated grouse is about the size of our pheasant ; however, they differ considerably, those birds that inhabit southern Illinois being at least one-fourth larger than those obtained in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the north-west prairies. They are of a beautiful mottled brown and fawn colour, frequently with white finger-marks on the upper portion of the wings and back, are feathered down the legs to the feet, have beautifully set-on small heads with a slight crest, and a bright yellow iris. When standing, their attitude is very erect, but graceful, while their flight is strong and swift, more especially late in the season. On being flushed, they invariably cackle, and the first flight, except of young birds, is always long. In the commencement of the season, and in fact as long as the weather is bright and mild, they lie remarkably

<sup>1</sup> The most killing hackles for tying trout flies.

well to dogs; but, as soon as severe and cold weather sets in, they pack and become wild. However, late in October, if you should hit upon a warm summer-like day, the birds will lie so remarkably close between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. that marvellous bags of them can sometimes be made.

As a table delicacy this bird can favourably compare with any of the grouse family, but is dissimilar in one respect from all the others—that the sooner it is cooked after being killed, the more delicate and savoury it will be found. Even the skill of Delmonico, in New York, the justly celebrated restaurant proprietor, with all his knowledge of *cuisine*, cannot impart the flavour that the same bird would have had from the hands of the most ignorant cook, provided it was served a few hours after it was killed.

The Pinnated grouse can easily be domesticated. M. Audubon, the naturalist, for some time kept quite a number in a walled garden, at Henderson, Kentucky, where they became as tame as domestic fowls; nor do I believe there would be any

difficulty in transporting them across the Atlantic. To gentlemen stocking preserves, or desirous of being able to show a great variety of game upon their estate, I believe this magnificent member of the grouse genus well worthy of attention.

## FISHING AT GIBRALTAR.

DEAR old Gibraltar, much as thou art frequently railed at, I believe the faults are more imaginary than real. Englishmen are grumblers proverbially and truly, more particularly the untravelled specimens. Transport them once away from native soil, and nothing that they see or make use of is equal to what is to be had at home. I am almost inclined to believe that there is a spirit of discontent in the breed, for our cousins across the Atlantic, although to a less degree, are strongly impregnated with the same peculiarity. Why is it that you seldom find one who is doing garrison duty at Gibraltar who does not sigh for change? True, you, if a subaltern, have more guards to keep, and in the cool season an overplus of brigade days, still you have your hounds, who although they do



not kill whenever they meet, afford plenty of fun ; you have numerous pretty rides open to you into Spain, and if a fisherman or shot, sport can both be obtained in the bay and over the straits in the vicinity of Tangiers quite as good as you probably enjoyed at home, unless you had the privilege of whipping a well-stocked salmon river or ranging a carefully preserved demesne. Although I am certain this garrison is seldom without numerous followers of old Izaak Walton, yet I dare say that few have essayed their art while there—why, I cannot say—for although I did constantly, I never met a companion, and more the pity ; for fishing (that is, sea fishing), is here to be obtained of the greatest excellence.

The New Mole, where vessels obtain their requisite fuel, used to be a favourite haunt of mine, more particularly on those serene, romantic nights peculiar to the Mediterranean, when with a light rod and a small brilliant artificial minnow attached to very light tackle, I used to capture dozens of a beautiful little fish of the mackerel family ; true they were not large, seldom exceeding

nine or ten inches in length, but then they were so game, giving as much sport as a half-pound trout, before you could safely land them ; and when fishing for these resplendent little beauties, you would occasionally hook a monster, when your only option was to give him the butt, place a check on your line, and force the weak portion of your tackle to part. So often did this occur to me that I determined to go armed for emergencies ; and having obtained a most powerful bamboo rod and attached to it a salmon reel, with a sardine for bait, I determined to try the results ; nor was I long kept in suspense ; the rush came, line was given, but all of no avail, for the hoped-for captive refused to be taken, and the loss of hooks and leader followed. A dozen times I made the essay, and a dozen times the results were similar. What those leviathans were I never knew with certainty, but I always strongly suspected the ravisher to be no less than a tunny fish. To possess a big fellow I found was impossible, so I stuck to the little mackerel, and revenged upon them the next morning at breakfast the depredations of their seniors.

At Catalin Bay, where I had to serve the allotted period of commandant duty, I found the fishing even better than on the west side. When I was sent there I should have liked to question the colonel as to the justice of his selection ; but, after all, the two months flitted by, and even now I look back with pleasure on the diminutive Genoese fishing village. Perhaps by chance there is a fisherman stationed there now ; well, if so, I will put him up to the ropes. As you go along southward from the village to visit your guards there is a cave. Passing through it, you find a port-hole, looking perpendicularly down on the Mediterranean. When there is an easterly wind blowing, the surf breaks beneath in grandest splendour. From this port-hole, with strong tackle and plenty of fresh sardines for bait, you can take more fish in the course of the day than will suffice for your whole detachment.

Off Catalin Bay there is a bank four good miles from land. Get the village fisherman to take you to it, and if fortune smile upon you with the favour it did on me, you will cry before the night is over, " Hold, enough." The fish principally taken were

a copper-coloured bream, about three or four pounds in weight and named bissugo. They are so numerous that we never thought of drawing up our lines till we had two or more victims hooked ; and how do you think we knew this ? Simply in this way,—one fish on, you only felt a direct tug ; two or more a constant vibration of the line, as if a party were squabbling over it, and each endeavouring to take it in their possession.

## SPORTING REMINISCENCES.

FOR some days I had had a terribly hard time of it. The ground had drunk its full—and to spare—of snow-water, game was scarce and wild, and the scanty herbage that my horse and mule were able to obtain since we entered the plains was barely sufficient to keep them alive; still, good seventy miles more had to be traversed before I could reach the friendly shelter of the belt of timber that surrounded the Forks. If it had been autumn, I dare not have chosen this route, for it is a debatable ground of the Camanche and Arraphaho, to whom a solitary white man would be so tempting a morsel that he could not fail to be caught, and we will not say what done to ; the very conjecture is disagreeable. The severity of the late weather, therefore, was my safety ; for red-skins, no less

than white men, dislike unnecessary exposure. Still I was convinced some stragglers must have lately visited the neighbourhood, for the occasional head of game I saw was so wary that I concluded that intruders had lately disturbed them. One thing was very much in my favour—I was in the “lightest marching order,” no pack of peltries, or well-stocked kit had I, for a few pounds of bullets, a pound of powder, and my buffalo robe, were all my animal had for a load. How independent a fellow feels when all his worldly goods can be summed up in so few words! To keep as much in the nags as possible, in case speed might be required, on the look-out for anything suspicious, with cautious, slow steps, I pursued my route to the eastward. Nothing occurred to increase my watchfulness; in truth, I commenced to believe that I had unnecessarily alarmed myself, when, crossing a small watercourse, on the edge of which was a sandy margin, plainly I saw the prints where three horses had lately passed. The forefeet of one of them was shod—a good indication. Still, they might have lately been stolen from

some distant white settlement, so all my previous alarm and caution were almost reverted to. Half an hour afterwards I heard the report of a rifle ; but, as there was a roll in the prairie between me and the direction the sound came from, I could not see who had fired the shot. In ignorance of what was to be seen beyond, it would have been madness to have ridden to the top of the bluff ; so, turning off to the right into irregular, broken ground, the effects of the previous year's heat, I hobbled my beasts, and started cautiously to stalk my way to some high land, from whence I might obtain a view of the surrounding country, taking care to keep myself between the suspicious direction and my quadrupeds. I had not traversed over 150 yards, and was halted, the better to notice the most available cover for future progress, when first the head and shoulders, then the entire figure, of a man loomed o'er the top of the swell. Camanche or Arraphaho I knew at once he was not—perhaps Ossage or Potowatamy ; but what the deuce would bring him so many hundred miles from his own hunting lands ? However, as everything



in the shape of red-skins is to be dealt cautiously with, I changed my cartridges and got into a most convenient and unobtrusive shooting attitude, determined not to throw away a shot, or, much less, give my supposed foe a chance of returning the compliment. That he was alone, being dismounted, I knew could not be the case ; and as he was coming in the very direction of my fresh trail, which, if he was permitted to cross, he could not fail to discover, and, with the discovery, bring his whole party in pursuit of me, there was but one alternative for me to adopt. Last year, in this very locality, the Indians had been unusually active ; scarcely a gang of emigrants or traders who had taken the southern route but had lost members of their party ; in several instances neither sex nor age had been spared by these bloodthirsty marauders, so what could I expect, if alone I fell into the hands of a party of braves on the war path ? True, my scalp—for it has long been ignorant of a scalp lock—would scarcely be worth lifting, but then I did not want to knock under yet ; and if so, I preferred making a fight

for it, as, I think, under the excitement, the process of being wiped out is less painful.

By this time my stalwart apparition had approached within eighty yards ; he was a noble-looking figure, without the slouch of the red man when hunting, and his step was as free and independent as if he had been shooting over a private manor. A big bug he evidently was, conscious of his own divinity, still no eagle's feather or characteristic mark of a chief distinguished him ; presently he halted, and threw his heavy gun across his arm ; this movement caused me at once to recognize that he was a white man. Great was his surprise when he saw me leave my ambush ; quick as thought his rifle was cocked and brought to the port, but I prevented him from further hostile demonstrations by a salute in mother tongue. Our meeting was strange, both took a pretty good stare, and then mutually mentioned each other's name, for we had met before, and where ?—in no less distant a portion of the earth than in the realms of the Tycoon. A restless spirit, a crack shot, and passionately fond of field sports, the world was his demesne—

and where game was abundant, there he would be found, whatever were the dangers that surrounded it, laughing at hardship and privation, the bitters that make the sweets of life the more enjoyable by contrast.

Securing my animals, I accompanied him to the party to which he had attached himself; they had only lately left civilization, and through his interest my equine companions got "lashings" of corn, to which they had long been unaccustomed. The night passed discussing old friends, a flask of brandy, and a package of kill-a-kinnick tobacco; and when on the morrow I shook his sterling hand at parting he presented me with a couple more feeds of grain, which, without doubt, materially assisted my four-footed friends to traverse the remainder of the debatable ground.

## FISHING OFF SIMON'S BAY.

WHO has tried the fishing in Simon's Bay, Cape of Good Hope? Well, I have, and had such a take of fish as seldom do I remember falling to my lot. Those who have not visited Southern Africa will please to learn that the coast is wild, irregular, and rocky; possibly as uninviting as can be imagined; and the waves that roll in on this distant shore are giants in stature. Outside the anchorage of Simon's Bay is a light-ship; it marks the end of a most dangerous reef which has pounded holes in many a stout-built vessel: but this reef, though repellent to navigators, is most attractive to the inhabitants of the briny deep; and close to the light-ship, on the edge of the reef, we dropped anchor and commenced work.

The bait, which certainly deserves a description,

for such curious-looking shell-fish I never previously saw, was neither an oyster nor a mussel : it looked a little like both, for it had a hard external shell, and numbers clung together in bunches ; but oh, reader, hold your nostrils while they are opened, a description of the perfume is almost impracticable. If you have met a pretty little animal in the American forests, called a skunk, got a good sniff at his ottar, not of roses, you may imagine the other, being tolerably similar, only that there was the additional flavour of decomposed fish. But if we disliked the perfume, and made wry faces over it, the fish did not. They took it with a bolt the moment it reached the bottom. The prizes that we obtained were all rock fish, some of them of immense size ; in two or three hours we must have had several hundredweight in our boat, but unfortunately it commenced to blow, and we were compelled to up anchor, and run for it. Weather on this coast is very variable, not unlike what often will be experienced in the west of Scotland.

From the ship some of the seamen took a splendid fish, both for table and appearance. By

the bumboat people it was denominated the Cape salmon. As might be supposed, it had no relationship to the salmon family, but belonged, I think, to the same genus as the striped bass of North America, for the two are much alike, only the former is without the lateral lines possessed by the latter. This fish is well known here, and I believe is esteemed for the *cuisine*. A wonderful place also is Agulhas Bank for fish, but you must be becalmed to enjoy it, no pleasant circumstance when you are either in a hurry home or the reverse in a sailing vessel. A calm away down in those ocean latitudes does not bespeak a level deck ; no, quite the reverse ; the ship heaves, pitches, and rolls with the long swell. All motions are combined in her action, and the yards, masts, bulkheads, creak and groan in the most discordant complaining manner. No, no, far sooner would I hear the blast whistling through the shrouds ; ay, and so fiercely that the boatswain's whistle only played second fiddle, than listen to the complaining labours of a becalmed ship in the Southern Indian Ocean. But about Agulhas Bank. A friend of

mine, a really good and experienced fisherman, had the luck (if such it may be called) to have a couple of days' fishing on this distant shoal. Now this person had fished on the Newfoundland banks, and had wondrous tales to tell, but never aught like this. His belief is that there is not a place in the world to equal it as a fishing ground.<sup>1</sup> If this be the case, is it not surprising that some tight little schooners have not yet made it their haunt? The weather here cannot be more formidable or dangerous to shipping than the north-east coast of America, while the traffic and consequent danger of collision is infinitely less; moreover, there are nowadays most opulent markets within easier distances than those vessels have that sail annually from British and French ports for the great bank of Newfoundland or the Labrador coast.

<sup>1</sup> On account of the immense influx of emigrants to South Africa, resulting from the newly discovered gold-fields, the above is an industry that would pay better than digging the precious metal.



## A BEAR ADVENTURE.

IN following a flight of ruffed grouse, which had risen so far beyond range as to have prevented my getting a shot at them, I came across a perfect brake of wild grape vines loaded with fruit. I could not withstand the temptation of halting for a feed, for they had been touched with frost, which changes them from the most unpalatable to the most agreeably flavoured fruit. The day had been warm for the end of autumn, and I suppose the fatigue of my tramp, together with the delightful shade afforded by the overhanging trees, induced me to lie down, and, as could be expected under the circumstances, I fell asleep. How long I might have been in a state of oblivion I cannot say, but I was awoke by my companion, a mongrel English terrier, barking vociferously at some intruder. After a

stretch, a yawn, and the usual awakening actions, I turned in the direction of Prince to see what on earth had raised his ire and disturbed my siesta, when, judge my astonishment, I beheld a large bear erect, pulling down the vines not twenty yards off, ignorant of my presence, but occasionally casting a furtive glance back at his angry assailant, who took precious good care to keep beyond arm's length. Men become cool in such situations, either from association or the power of controlling their feelings. My gun lay at my side loaded with number six; if Bruin found me out and became aggressive at close quarters, say eight or ten yards, I was prepared to risk the issue; if he would only move off a little way, still keeping to windward, I thought I might improve my opportunity by substituting a brace of bullets. Under any circumstance my gun would be required, so watching the first opportunity, when the bear's back was turned, I brought my double-barrel close by my side and cocked each lock. Many may laugh when I say I did not feel nervous; but I did not, and remained watching with special pleasure the enjoy-

ment that my foe appeared to take in crunching up whole bunches of the luscious fruit. As he worked farther from me my dog became less uneasy, only occasionally giving way to a suppressed growl, which his feelings I suppose were unable to control.

First one barrel was unloaded and the heavier missile substituted, then the next underwent the same operation, Bruin being now out of sight, still within hearing; but the tables were turned; if formerly I was prepared to leave him alone, I now felt equal to acting on the aggressive. Giving Prince a little encouragement, he again rushed to the attack, and it is wonderful with how much more ardour, knowing that his master's eye was on him. Soon I knew the dog had nipped the intruder, for I heard a rush, and dogs will retreat towards their masters, which brought Bruin full in view. As the distance was greater than I liked, I hesitated to fire, but the bear had seen me, and disliking my appearance, turned to make off, but the brave little cur was at his heels, and as I cheered him to the attack, he never lost an opportunity of pinching

Bruin's stern, who at length tree'd to avoid the persecuting little pest which hung on his rear, the most desirable course for me he could have adopted. By the time I reached the spot the enemy had gained the first fork of his perch, not twenty feet overhead, and is it to be wondered at that at such a short range, with not a twig to intervene, and with a clear view of his shoulder, one barrel brought him to the ground with no more life in his carcase than the usual death struggle? My trophy was not large but well fed, and his smoked hams afforded me for many a subsequent morning a *bonne bouche* worthy of a hunter.

But poor little Prince got into trouble before he reached home. As I struck the margin of a river which lay in my route, I observed a large bald-headed eagle sailing about. Keeping under the shelter of some brush, I waited for a chance. My right-hand barrel I had reloaded with heavy shot, and, as the bird passed about seventy yards off, I gave him a portion of its contents, which was responded to by its immediately reaching the ground with a broken wing. Prince, plucky with

the issue of his late engagement, made a dash at the bird, but caught a Tartar, for he was seized by both talons, and, but that I came to the rescue, would have been rendered useless for any other purpose than baiting a wolf trap. As it was, after I had killed the marauder I had some difficulty in unloosening the bird's claws, and I doubt if my faithful little mongrel had lived to the age of Methuselah, he ever would have been induced to tackle another bald-headed eagle.

## FISHING IN MAINE—CHAR OR TROUT.

MAINE, one of the oldest States of the many that compose the Union, is, strange to say, less densely settled, less cultivated, and probably less known, than many of those that can date their existence no further back than twenty or thirty years. The causes to which this is attributable are three, viz. the severity of the winters, the indifference of the soil, and the rugged, mountainous, rocky surface of the landscape. But where man is scarce there look for the wild denizens of the forest. Here the moose, cariboo, and bear are still to be found, the homes of the beaver, otter, fischer, and minx remain in many instances undisturbed, and in them even the dreaded panther, painter, or more correctly puma, is not rare. Neither are fish wanting ; the

country is a perfect labyrinth of lakes and rivers, which swarm with various species of the salmon family ; but, sad to say, the grand, the great, *Salmo salar*, the beloved of the angler, the *bonne bouche* of the epicure, has almost disappeared, for unfortunately, on all the outlets of the rivers, there are towns, and the inhabitants have long since verified the proverb of the goose and the golden egg. What Englishmen have done at home, so have their cousins done across the Atlantic. Englishmen and Americans, as merchants and traders, have been credited with acumen and foresight ; such credit they may have justly earned abroad, but their policy in reference to their home fisheries has been until lately totally the reverse.<sup>1</sup> However, state legislatures have taken the subject up, and the sportsman may soon expect an improvement. So let us hope that they will unanimously adopt the means that scientific men have pointed out for remedying and counteracting their past transgressions.

But let not the enthusiast run away with the

<sup>1</sup> My friend the Honourable Robert Roosevelt is the person to whom all honour is owing for the prevention of annihilation of the salmon proper in these waters.



idea that in Maine there are no drawbacks to pleasure, that sport is found without an alloy, for the pests of every new land here swarm, black flies, mosquitoes, and sandflies; but fortunately their reign of terror does not exist over six weeks. The first (the black fly), which is about the size of a small house fly, and not dissimilar in appearance to the tsetse fly of Africa, is a perfect cannibal, refusing to be driven away, willingly immolating himself in his thirst for blood, and drawing blood whenever he can obtain a footing; up your trousers, down your shirt sleeves or collar, everywhere he will get at his victim. Kill them by thousands, the phalanxes apparently undiminished will return to the attack; and even domestic animals do not escape, although they do not die from their bite. The unfortunate cow that had been driven up to supply our camp with milk I have seen changed from a strawberry colour to a black, by the myriads of these vampires that cling to her; and, but that we lit a large smudge,<sup>1</sup> for her to stand over, I

<sup>1</sup> Decayed damp wood, which burns slowly and emits a great quantity of smoke.

believe the poor old creature would have died under the incessant torture and irritation. But if the poor cow suffered, so did we, and it was only by constantly lubricating the exposed parts of our persons with oil of tar, or oil of pennyroyal, that we were enabled to stand the ordeal. Fortunately, the black fly is hungry during daylight only; like a respectable citizen, he early goes to rest, and equally early recommences business.

Next come the mosquitoes. I have found the same gentry troublesome in the Mediterranean, bad on the Malay Peninsula, worse in the paddy fields of China, but all these lack the 'cuteness and insolence of their Yankee cousins. If your hand is bare for a moment, a dozen will be on it; when up to your knees in a pool, and fast in a big fish, both hands consequently employed, your face and the back of your neck will begin to itch by their assaults—to burn—as if scalding water had been poured over them. Nor were the sandflies deserving of better character, for though so small that you can scarcely perceive

them, their powers of annoyance are tremendous.<sup>1</sup> Thank Providence that none of these wretches are made as big as the *feræ naturæ*, or else genus *homo* must soon become extinct. I will here tell a little circumstance that befell the writer; he and two acquaintances were fishing under a fall; fish were abundant, but space, on account of the trees, too limited for so many rods, so down the stream he started, and forgot in his desire to beat the others in results the odious preparation of oil of tar. After half an hour's scrambling through brush and climbing over rocks, he at length reached such a lovely pool. The first cast showed it to be alive with fish, and they in the proper way of thinking. Soon the gravel margin had over a dozen beauties glittering in all their glorious colouring, but the sun was near the horizon, and the attendant warned the angler that time was up. On joining his friends, long and vociferous were their peals of laughter whenever they looked at him. What the deuce was up? On arrival at the shanty all was explained. The black flies had attacked him when

<sup>1</sup> Called by the Indians "No-see ums," from their minuteness.

so immersed in his sport that they had been unnoticed, or brushed off, making his countenance the most extraordinary-looking mess of blood and bruised flies imaginable ; but if he did not then feel the pain, you may be sure he did that night when he got warm in bed.

Knowing that such torments exist, why did the writer go there ? is naturally asked, and as simply answered, for before he started he was assured that not even a mosquito was to be found in Maine. Afterwards it was discovered that the visit of his informant had been paid to this Ultima Thule late in autumn. A dozen times conclusions were come to of sloping (not for Texas) in the morning ; but the attractions were so great that even the entire summer, even on to the end of October, was got through, the last two or three months so delightfully, that the self-sacrifice endured in June and July was more than compensated for; and never can be forgotten the beautiful weather, glorious sport, and free independent life enjoyed. The State of Maine, being of considerably larger proportions than England and Scotland together, it is desirable that the particular locality alluded to should be

mentioned. Seventy miles from the thriving seaport of Portland, along the Grand Trunk line of railroad will be found on the map the picturesque, clean, flourishing village of Bethel ; twenty-seven miles north from it Lake Umbagog. Here you have the last settlement, and by following up the Androscoggin river, which enters the top of the last-mentioned lake, you get into a perfect labyrinth of lakes and ponds, united together by brawling streams, only navigable by the lumberman's flat or Indian's birchbark. On all sides precipitous mountains rise, covered with pine trees where there is a possibility of their clinging, or immense boulders, to all appearance ready to roll from their resting-place into the waters beneath. And here in this vast solitude, free from cares, I made my home ; fishing or hunting by day, and sleeping such sleep upon piles of hemlock as seldom is enjoyed on feather beds ; for though the bears might growl around, the grey wolf give me a proof of his vocal powers, or the weird note of the loon come shrilly over the waters, still all formed but a lullaby to make me rest the better.

In fishing the rivers of all the wild lands of the

extreme northern portion of the United States and the Dominion for trout or salmon, little or no sport will be experienced by the angler until the snow water has run off; in fact, I do not believe the latter fish will enter a river that has not got rid of that addition. We got to our fishing ground just at the desired time; a guide we consulted said we were too soon. It being better to be early than late, we pushed at once for our first halting place, and the result was that we hit things so nicely that we struck the opening day. For about two or three weeks the take was very great, and the variety of colouring among our prizes was something wonderful. A collecting naturalist, a pupil of the celebrated professor of Natural History at <sup>Harvard</sup> Yale College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, joined our party a few days after our arrival, and all these various coloured fish were designated by him as *Salmo fontinalis*. With so great an authority I did not presume to differ, still when he informed me that the *Salmo fontinalis* of American waters was identical with our home brook trout, I thought that the lively, game little beauty of our mountain streams had wonderfully changed in colour and



outline from his transatlantic brother, or *vice versa*. As the weather began to get warmer the more brilliant coloured specimens became scarcer, and ultimately ceased to be taken in the river. This circumstance induced me further to think that there was some difference either in habits or choice of haunts which their more plain-clothed relatives did not affect, and that at least there were different varieties, if not species, among the inhabitants of this stream; and the more I think the subject over now, the more thoroughly do I feel convinced that the name of *Salmo fontinalis* has been frequently applied to what is, in reality, our red-bellied char. Memory is often not to be depended upon, but with the assistance of a few notes (the lapse of time not being more than a few years), I will endeavour to tell the differences that I most particularly observed. In outline of shape, what I suppose to be the red-bellied char much resembled a well-fed trout, except that the first dorsal fin is nearer the head, the caudal fin has a wider spread at its termination, and the junction of the caudal fin with the body is more tapered away. In colouring, the back was of a deep



mackerel green interwoven with irregular darker waving lines, while the belly was as brilliant as burnished copper. Above, where the green of the black and red of the stomach ran into each other, there were three lateral lines of large brilliant red spots, interspersed with minor straw-coloured ones, and in some specimens the anal and pectoral fins had the first two or three spines black. Altogether in shape and colouring a more game-looking, beautiful fish cannot be imagined; moreover, their table qualities surpassed in delicacy of flavour any fish I have ever eaten, for the bright red flesh had a delicate nutty flavour indescribable, and, I fear, scarcely imaginable. Our guide, who was also cook and master of camp, used to fry in cream the smaller ones, and I doubt if ever prince or epicure had a dish placed before him more worthy of his palate.

But having given what I know to be, more particularly to the naturalist, a far from perfect description of this handsome fish's peculiarities, its habits, as differing from the trout I have known, may have interest. With the artificial fly they were not so readily taken as with minnow or worm. When hooked I never knew them to spring from

the water, and the quiet reach of the pool was invariably a more certain find than the brawling neck. After sunset I never could succeed in capturing them, and the best hours in the day were from sunrise till it commenced to get warm and the two hours preceding sunset. After these fish had disappeared from the river, I discovered that they could be taken in the deep waters in the lakes, either with minnow or natural fly, the bait being sunk close to the bottom; and the places where I was generally most successful in this fishing were where, our guide affirmed, were situated the springs that partially fed these lakes; his reason for this statement being that this portion of the lake always remained open in winter, while the remainder invariably froze up.

Again, after these fish had deserted the river I had some admirable sport with them by going to the top of the lake and coming down on the annual lumber raft. I was put up to this by the guide; he for years had followed lumbering, and the rafts as they floated down, he assured me, were always followed by swarms of trout. His information was correct as to the numbers of fish, but instead

of the trout of the river, I found my beautiful brilliant-coloured friend. This habit is peculiar, to say the least of it, and untrout-like, and I could only account for it in two ways, viz. either the shade afforded by these immense logs formed the attraction, or the constant immersion of the timber in the water caused the insect inhabitants of the bark to be drowned out of their retreats, and to drop off in the water, furnishing these fish with a favourite food.

Summer drifted past, and with it disappeared the incessant, persecuting flies. Autumn, with all that brilliant colouring so remarkable in America, made its appearance, and the oppressive heat gave way to the most desirable temperature. An English autumn to me is always sad ; an American autumn is quite the reverse, the hues and colours of the former are sombre, in those of the latter brilliancy unsurpassable predominates. An American autumn once seen makes as lasting an impression on the memory of mature age, as the gorgeous fairy scene of the pantomime when first beheld, upon that of youth. For some time none

of the bright-hued fish had been taken, and I much feared that my acquaintance with them for that year had terminated ; but not so. A few sharp nights of frost took place, and going one morning to obtain sufficient fish for breakfast, in the run that formed the exit of the river from the lake, I with pleasure, in succession, captured several of the beauties. From that day forward they became more numerous, and the last morning's fishing which I here enjoyed, with the snow flying so thick that I could scarcely see my flies, I killed not only the greatest number, but the heaviest of this brilliant species, that I had captured during the season. With regret, having no desire to pass almost an arctic winter, I turned my back upon the three lovely lakes, with the following unpronounceable Indian names, Molleychunkeymunk, Moose-luckmaguntic, and Moligewalk, to seek the boundless prairies of the Far West, and to substitute my double barrel in place of my well-tried tapering fly-rod.

In my experience as a fisherman in Scotland and Ireland I never knew of our river trout being

captured in the sea. In Long Island, what is there called the brook trout (*Salmo fontinalis*) is well known periodically, when practicable, to visit salt water ; in fact, they are constantly taken with the fly in the tidal portion of those streams. The char of Norway and Sweden does the same, and I can only say that both these fish are wondrously alike. On the other hand, the brilliant coloured inhabitants of the interior lakes of Maine, that I have mentioned, cannot do so, for if they survived the descent of the Burling falls, their ascent would be impossible. Although the arctic char goes to the sea, the more resplendent coloured relation remains, I think, constantly in his fresh water retreats—*id est*, supposing this is a char. To me it would be particularly interesting to know if my surmises as to the proper species of this beautiful fish are correct ; and doubtless there are numbers of English fishermen whose verdict, even from my imperfect description, would set at rest a point important both to naturalist and sportsman.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written specimens have through my exertions been acclimated in Great Britain, and my surmises are found to be correct.

## ANIMAL LIFE.

“There is a pleasure in the pathless wood,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore.”

UNDOUBTEDLY every one who loves nature has felt the truth of the above assertions, but is not this pleasure, this rapture increased by the addition of animal life, whether it be the occasional glimpse of the timid hare, the momentary glance at the graceful, playful squirrel, the sea-birds dipping o'er the countless waves, or the fish-hawk hunting for its prey? Yes, there is society, where man does not intrude, and society the most enchanting, that of the beautiful wild animals, rejoicing in their freedom, happy in their liberty, knowing no fear, dreading no intrusion. For hours in the far western forests of America I have stood, scarcely daring to breathe for fear I should disturb some family party, ay, although I knew full well that

but for a successful shot, supperless I should have to sleep ; yet who that could for a moment think would wantonly destroy a member of the little coterie, disturb their innocent gambols, their playful, graceful tricks? Were they but for a moment aware of man's dreaded presence, all would precipitantly make a hurried and fearful retreat. The true lover of nature loves not alone the landscape, but loves these numerous additions, fascinating and inexpressible, without which the effect of the grand foreground, the beautiful intermediate, and the soft subdued distance, would be materially diminished. In the northern portion of the State of Maine the scenery is truly sublime ; mountain after mountain rises, as if each strove to overtop the other. Giant pine-trees cling from precipice and crag, hanging as if suspended in the air, boulders and rocks of all fantastic outlines, far, far above, threaten instant destruction to all underneath ; brawling streams, grandly impetuous, leap and throw themselves from rock to rock, while every now and then glimpses of glassy-surfaced lakes, embosomed in wood, form a lovely distance.



But this country, picturesque as it is, is almost destitute of animal life ; there no songster greeted my ear with his melody ; no startled deer bounded across my path, so that an intense solitude that became painful prevented the enjoyment that might have been anticipated. But if grand natural scenery, ne'er desecrated by the hand of man, wants animal life to set it off to the greatest perfection, how much more do our tame artificial ground and waters require this adjunct ?

Few of our citizens can, when they choose, fly away into the highlands, the lake district, or the wilds of Connemara, but have to be satisfied with the planned and formal beauties which our numerous public and private pleasure-grounds afford ; and would not the enjoyment of these resorts be greatly enhanced if more animal life were added to the picture ? In the city of Philadelphia a public park is tenanted by great numbers of squirrels of different varieties, whose tameness, merry antics, and sprightliness cause them to be the admiration of all visitors. Could not squirrels be introduced here into London ? not

our common red variety, but the handsome black, grey, or ground squirrel of the American continent. What a suitable place would Kensington be for such inmates, and what a fund of amusement they would afford to the juveniles that in such numbers frequent it! There are also several beautiful varieties of water-fowl, whose advent would, I am certain, be welcomed, such as the gallinule, spring-tail duck, loon, sheldrake, summer and black duck; all of these species are exceedingly hardy, and the Serpentine and numerous other waters are equally adapted to their requirements. Further, while on the subject aquatic, I am informed that there are fish in the majority of these miniature lakes, but they must be of a very base order, grovellers in mud, so much afraid to show their ugly carcasses that the human eye is never greeted with their presence. Of course, in comparatively speaking stagnant water, the river or brook trout would not flourish, the lake trout might, although I doubt it, there being an insufficiency of depth without cool springs at the bottom to prevent the water in summer becoming heated,

and a cool retreat is absolutely necessary for their health. However, there is a fish across the Atlantic equal to either of the two mentioned, gamier for his size, and a much bolder feeder, viz. the black bass, which is a frequenter of both running and still water, clear or muddy, an admirable table adjunct, and almost unmatched in the eyes of the sportsman for pluck and gameness, taking indiscriminately the artificial fly or trolling bait, springing from the water when hooked, and refusing to be landed till after a long, fierce, and protracted struggle. I have killed a very great number of trout, and also black bass, and although it was a long time before I could believe that anything of the size could equal the former, I have for some time been compelled unequivocally to give the palm to the latter. Now if we had this fish in the Serpentine, the water would not remain without a ripple; its presence would soon become known by its rising at the flies and otherwise disporting itself upon the surface. Who that has stood at sunset by the brink of some calm river, or the margin of some

unrippled loch, say in the Highlands, where trout are abundant, has not been delighted to watch the eager fish breaking water after their prey, and inwardly made notes of the size of each, from the amount of their element that was displaced? When we have suitable homes to offer, do by all means let us have lots of animals; much room for thought is afforded by their habits, much pleasure from their innocent pastimes, and the influence engendered by association with them is certainly most beneficial upon all, more particularly upon the youthful members of our race.

## STRANGE FISHES.

WHEN returning from shooting pinnated grouse in the State of Illinois, I came upon a party of farmers who were netting a pond on the edge of the timber land. This sheet of water was about two-thirds of a mile long, with an average breadth of one hundred and fifty yards. The bottom was composed of mud, except the southern end, where it was gravel. Only when very high floods occurred in the Wabash river was there an outlet or inlet to this piece of water ; still, I knew it was well stocked with fish, for, on a previous evening, as I stood on its margin as the sun went down, waiting for the arrival of wild duck, I had seen the surface in portions broken into spray by the fishes' numerous pastimes, or their energetic pursuit of their prey. With curiosity I stopped to see the result of the

agriculturalists' first haul, and well was my patience rewarded, for what food for study was in the results! First and foremost, from the size and peculiarity of formation, I will mention what the fisherman designated a "spoonbill catfish"—a name without doubt given by some one who knew as little about genus and species as a cow does about a watch-pocket. This curious fish was beautifully shaped, with all those perfections of shape that characterize the salmon family, but projecting from his head was a muscular continuation about sixteen inches long, and six broad in the centre, not unlike the blade of a canoe-paddle. This spoonbill was entirely separated from and projecting over and independent of the mouth, the lower jaw being in its ordinary place; nor was the mouth large. As nature forms nothing without purpose, of what use was this protrusion? My own idea is that it was a feeler, used in poking about through the weeds, decayed vegetation, and mud, and by its sensitiveness the fish was enabled to find his food. On handling this *rara piscis*, I found that the slightest pressure on this attach-

ment appeared to produce intense pain. The skin was entirely free from scales from the tail to the termination of the projection, and was very smooth and soft, not at all dissimilar to the skin of an eel. For a trifle I secured the prize, as I was assured it was an excellent table addition, and my information was perfectly correct. I afterwards cut up the proboscis to satisfy my curiosity, and found it entirely composed of gristle, the surface underneath the skin being a labyrinth of veins. Afterwards I saw, at different times, many of this curious family, thus proving that they are in no way rare ; still, I have never seen them mentioned by naturalists. Probably it is exclusively confined to inland western American waters. Further, I would say their vitality was remarkable, for after transporting it home it lived for over an hour. The weight of the entire fish was probably about sixteen pounds. The next attraction noticed was what is familiarly known in that vicinity as "the pond fish." In colour it much resembles the beautiful black bass, being in shape slender and graceful ; the placement of the fins is the same as in the pike family, but the



head is small and not unlike that of a trout. It is a greedy feeder, but from its being uneatable (the flesh being hard and rank) is considered a great bore by the fishermen. Their average weight is from two to four pounds. Still another variety with which I had been previously unacquainted was captured, viz. "the Great Western Carp," there called "the Buffalo fish." It is frequently taken of enormous size—several I have seen weighing over twenty pounds. They are much and deservedly esteemed, and are caught in immense numbers in the spring of the year by spearing; for as soon as a flood takes place, when the water is rising, they rush out over all the inundated lands, wherever there is sufficient depth for them to swim. For more than an hour one day I watched a lad, spear in hand, who had taken his post over a culvert which passed under the Ohio and Mississippi railroad, made similar to a sluice for the purpose of preventing the water in time of floods becoming dammed. During my stay this youngster must have killed a couple of hundredweight. You must not imagine

that the above-mentioned were all that were in the net. Sunfish, pike, pickerel, black bass,\* catfish, mullet, and turtle to a waggon-load rewarded the fishermen's efforts. In the end of the bag I was about to place my hand upon what I considered a rare prize, when I was stopped by the rough intervention of one of the people, and the exclamation of, "You don't want to die before your time? If he bite you all the whisky in the county won't save you." (Whisky is considered an infallible cure for snake bites.) This nondescript to be avoided was like Siebold's salamander, with four of the smallest and most awkward-looking legs; the repulsive-looking brute was about fourteen inches long, and was there known as a water-dog. It frequently takes the fisherman's bait, who then prefers to cut his line and lose the hook to becoming on any more intimate terms with his captive.

## BUCK SHOT.

FOR many a day I puzzled myself to account for the uncertainty of the patterns frequently made with buck shot, from the same barrels, with the same quality and quantity of powder. At one discharge at long range, say eighty yards, every pellet would enter a disc of five feet in diameter; at the next discharge, for no obvious reason that I could learn, they would be scattered over the extent of a coach-house door; through the first pattern it would be impossible for a deer to pass scathless; through the second the probabilities of doing so were all in its favour. However, after much time, I think not wasted, I believe I have hit on a method by which the wandering inclinations of buck shot can be curtailed and reduced to considerable subservience. For instance, we will suppose a ten-bore gun (the size I invariably used

abroad) be taken ; procure buck shot of such a size that the barrel will exactly chamber four, that is, that four will fit in the barrel without using force, for if force be used their regularity of shape will be injured, and their flight will become erratic. Having thus learned the desired size of shot, make a cartridge of tolerably thick paper,<sup>1</sup> carefully place your shot in layers of four each ; with some grease reduced to a liquid consistency by heat fill up the vacancies between each layer, and as the grease cools and becomes solid, place in each layer till the cartridge contains sixteen pellets, when finish your cartridge by inserting a thin hard wad, turn down the surplus paper over it, and fix with a drop of glue. Since adopting the above method, I have frequently killed wild duck when I was returning of an evening from deer shooting, at ranges far beyond the reach of ordinary drop shot ; at the same time I would not wish a sportsman to imagine that I would purposely load with this cartridge for duck shooting ; but that I made use of them, as my gun happened at the time to be

<sup>1</sup> This is applicable to muzzle loaders, still much used abroad.

so loaded. I am no advocate for long barrels, twenty-six inches being the length of the hardest shooting shot guns, for ordinary shot, I have known. But I have observed that long barrels invariably throw buck shot the best; possibly the reason is that the missiles are then the less permitted to scatter, or that the friction with such large grain being reduced, the impetus does not meet the resistance presented to the smaller and more compact fitting grains. An American gentleman, who for some months frequently shot with me, had a ten bore gun thirty-six inches in the barrels, made, I think, by a gun-maker named Abbey, of Chicago, and weighing very nearly nine pounds. Such a cannon would soon have worn me out; but my friend was big all over and strong as an ox, and on the longest and hardest days, whether shooting snipe, duck, pinnated grouse, or deer, never appeared to suffer from its weight. Well, this gun was an extraordinary performer with buck shot; on one occasion I saw him kill a brace of deer right and left so far off that I hesitate to say the distance, knowing how sceptical many are on the subject of long shots.

## THE AMERICAN TROTTING HORSE —ITS ORIGIN.

THE following is abridged from a lecture delivered by me, before the New York Athenæum. The subject is so interesting to all lovers of the horse that I have much pleasure in reproducing it.

There is no nation on the face of the earth so thoroughly imbued with a love of the genus *Equus* as England ; and knowing this to be the case, I trust I may be pardoned in advancing a theory which I believe not to be a fallacy, in reference to the origin of the American trotting horse, and from what source they inherit that speciality entitling them to be acknowledged the fastest animals in the world in that peculiar pace. But in case some readers are inclined to disallow this superiority, and dispute the point that American

horses are faster trotters than ours, permit me to state that across the Atlantic I have seen many nags that could perform their mile in harness in much less than two minutes and a half, and three that have trotted the same distance in less than two minutes and twenty seconds ; moreover, they have the most enduring qualities, as can be attested by several having performed their twenty miles within the hour ; and that, after much investigation, I have been unable to find a single instance recorded of anything like similar rates of speed having been made by any of our British-bred animals. However, it would be better to state before going further, that there are plenty of thorough-bred horses in America ; but it must be remembered that they are all sprung from stock imported from the old country, and that they are totally distinct from the family of trotters, although of late years the appearance of the latter has been much improved by judiciously crossing the two—in fact, so much so, that some of the late crack trotters have quite a racy look, one in particular, Lady Thorne, who, if her appearance does not



speaking falsely, would make no contemptible figure on the turf or across country; yet from all my experience and inquiries I have been unable to hear of a trotting *débutante* of pure breeding, nor do I believe such exists.

Some Americans I have heard avow that it was the result of training, and that Englishmen did not understand the art of teaching a horse how to make such use of his legs so as to obtain the greatest amount of trotting speed; and that they felt confident, that had they but the opportunity, they could select out of our pastures numerous youngsters, who, in course of time, would be made successfully to rival the performances of any of the prodigies who annually exhibit on the various trotting courses in the United States. To this supposition I beg to disagree, for I am convinced if such *rara aves* existed, their excellence would as certainly be developed in an English breaker's hands as under the tutelage of a representative of any other nationality. At the same time it is true that trotting is not paid so much attention to, or is nearly so popular among Englishmen, as upon the western

continent, where it may almost be designated the national amusement ; but what person of means here would not be desirous of possessing a horse that could outpace all others on the road, assist him to catch a train or post, transport him in the shortest time to distant meets of hounds, bring him home at railway speed after a hard day's shooting, or when thoroughly drenched, tired, and exhausted with a long day's hunting in a heavy country, land him at his hall door in half the accustomed time ? Doubtless all would like such a useful hack, and doubtless such an animal would sell at a fabulous price ; hence the inducement, if we had the raw material, to bring it to perfection.

But have we the material ? I say not, but believe our horses and the American (not alluding to the thorough-bred, who are much in the minority in numbers) owe their origin to different sources, that trotting is a national characteristic of the one, galloping or cantering of the other, and the more I have seen of the two races the more thoroughly am I convinced that such is the case. In Kentucky, when visiting the farm of an exten-

sive breeder, and who has bred and owned some of the most celebrated race and trotting horses in that state, I inspected both his droves of young ones, the race horses and the trotters (for both families are kept separate and distinct), and was very much struck with the marked difference in their appearance; the latter being heavy chested, large limbed, small headed with tapering muzzle, while the tail was generally set on very low. However, if they differed in appearance, in manner and habit they were more essentially unlike; when you alarmed the thorough-breds off they went at a swinging gallop: if the trotters, their favourite pace would be chosen, and in few instances, however much you might coerce them to increase their speed, could they be induced to break, and it must be borne in mind that the majority had not yet passed into the breaker's hands, so that their action was natural.

Again, I purchased a horse in Illinois, the produce of a very good trotting mare. Up to the date of my owning him he had never been in harness. After a few trials he showed a very great

turn of speed, and in a month or two was a very fast trotter ; and so much did he prefer this gait, that no amount of punishment would cause him to break. Now, in this animal's education I did not use other means than those I have always practised at home ; still, I never previously had a hack that could drag a conveyance at the same velocity. To whom was the credit due, the horse or driver? Doubtless the reader will agree with me.

In temper and disposition a great dissimilarity is also apparent, for, as a rule, the American horse is very free from vice (kicking and biting being rarely found), sluggish, patient, and subservient, not unfrequently without a certain amount of mulishness in look and manner ; in fact, one of the most celebrated trotting stallions (the sire of Dexter, who a few years back made the best time in harness then on record, and many others almost as good), is the most wonderful likeness to that useful cross, viz. between the horse and ass, and thoroughly dissimilar to any of his race that I have seen in England ; however, he must not be

taken as a representative of all, for few handsomer harness horses could be found than Patchen, jun., Butler, and George Wilkes, all three of whom have reaped honours which will long render their names famous among the patrons of the American trotting turf.

Having stated my belief that the transatlantic trotter has a different origin from our home stock, it behoves me now to endeavour to point out the source from whence he came, and thus in part account for the marked difference which characterizes him. The horse is not a native of America. If we may believe historians, on the discovery of the American continent, no such animal existed there; the distant prairies and western slopes, which are now traversed by innumerable wild droves of horses, were then entirely without this genus. But whence are they sprung? How are these innumerable herds which are now found there to be accounted for? In the following manner:—The Spaniards were the first people to attempt any important conquests on the American continent. The first horses that were landed in

this country were the chargers of a military force under the command of Cortez. The natives, who at first received the foreign invaders with the strongest demonstrations of welcome, were overwhelmed with wonder and awe-stricken when they beheld the strangers mounted on animals dissimilar to any they had previously seen. Nor were the Spaniards slow to avail themselves of this advantage, and in the numerous reinforcements constantly forwarded from Spain, cavalry formed a large portion; familiarity between the natives and the dreaded animals soon reduced their fears, and as a natural consequence in many of the engagements that took place, the rider being slain, the charger was cast upon his own resources and became free. Again, upon the line of march, doubtless many a foot-sore and exhausted animal was left to perish, but liberty and rest imbued him with fresh spirit, and the forsaken, broken-down steed with abundant pasture, abundant water, perfect idleness, and self-control, soon became thoroughly resuscitated. Further, we learn that on one of the repulses which the Spaniards were



subjected to, in their hurry to save their lives, they turned their horses loose, and took to their ships ; and still again, when De Soto discovered the upper waters of the Mississippi, he turned all the expedition's horses free, as he had determined to continue his researches through that then *terra incognita*, on the bosom of the mighty father of waters. From these horses introduced by the Spaniards, and brought into the Far West by De Soto, are doubtless sprung the countless teams that the traveller may daily see over the unpeopled plains of Northern Texas and Northern Mexico. The Spaniards then brought the first horses to America ; but whence did they obtain them ? None could be got nearer than Europe, none more conveniently than in their own country ; we have, therefore, every right to conclude that the horses were from Spain, probably from the southern portion of it, as horses are more numerous there, and the inhabitants are more partial to horsemanship. Who that has travelled in Spain, if his eyes have been employed to take observation of more than the sierras and signoritas, can have failed to observe



that the native horse is very unlike (in many respects) the English or French species, and that this dissimilarity increases the further you go south ; but it is in this very dissimilarity that the descendants across the Atlantic differ from our home breed. Moreover, in Spain I have observed among their nags a great deal of what is termed in America "knee-action," a peculiar method of raising and placing the foot down, which is considered a necessary by the connoisseur in selecting an embryo trotter. The Spaniards like this action ; they think it showy, and cultivate it in their saddle-horses for the purpose of display, they being too indolent or ignorant to turn it to better account. Further, the roads are generally villainous throughout the land, and very unsuitable for quick driving ; in fact, some of the most wealthy and aristocratic Spaniards, even at the present day, always use mules in their carriages.

The Spanish horse doubtlessly has a very large proportion of Barb blood in his veins, more especially those of the southern portion ; this

may be accounted for by the shortness of the sea passage which in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar in suitable weather, even before the days of steam, could be made in three or four hours ; but the influx of Barbs into Spain, which must have been great, I do not attribute so much to accidental importation of individuals as to the numbers which doubtlessly had been taken there during the Moorish ascendancy for the purposes of war, more especially as the Moors at that period were famous as cavalry, and relied principally on this arm of the service for carrying out successfully their predatory system of warfare.

The Moorish horse also has very frequently this knee-action, previously mentioned in the Spaniard. I was particularly struck with it in some colts in the neighbourhood of Tangiers, and more especially in a horse, the property of one of the consuls. Out of the numerous importations which come to Gibraltar I have seen several who could trot very well, and if pains had been taken might have been made fast, not perhaps so fast as the American ; but then it must be remembered that

he (the latter) is a larger animal, of greater muscular development, which he doubtlessly owes to superior climate, intermixture of English blood, and the cultivating of this pace through successive generations.

In proof that the Barb can be made a trotter, it may not be irrelevant to mention that, when in Malta, I possessed a Tunisian horse as a hack. I ran him in one or two of the scratch races that frequently take place on the road to Sliema ; however, he acquitted himself so badly that he, and I fear his owner, became quite a laughing stock. Now, although this horse could not gallop, he could trot ; and often surprised me with his spurts of speed when pushed. After mess one evening, a staff officer, who was my guest, kept chaffing me on what he was pleased to call my dromedary. To put a termination to his nonsense, I offered to back myself to trot him to Sliema and back, from the St. Frances gate, in less than thirty-five minutes. The performance was accomplished, and very much under time ; nor in the return did I push my nag, as I found I had the race in my

hands. Now this Barb, if he had been in the possession of a person who would permit him no other gait, would doubtless have become a fast trotter.

Although a great many years may have passed since any direct importation of horses from Spain to America has taken place, still the resemblance between the two breeds remains most striking. The renowned sire, known as Rydsich's Hamiltonian, the father of a late champion of the transatlantic trotting turf, is unlike any horse I have ever seen in England, but is a perfect counterpart of many animals I have seen in Spain and Morocco, except that the American has the advantage in height and substance. Few of us have not seen pictures of the celebrated horse, familiarly known as the Godolphin Arab. Now, this horse was doubtlessly a Barb, his appearance at once tells it, if we can place reliance on the correctness of his portraits; and even could we not, the majority of authorities who have written on horse flesh, pronounce him to be so. In America I showed a picture of this redoubtable

animal (if I remember correctly, drawn by Stubbs) to a well-known breeder and possessor of trotting stock, and he assured me that it was a most perfect portrait of the sire of several trotting celebrities, and very like many others he had seen. I have further observed, that a great number of American horses were addicted to those most ungainly modes of progression called racking and pacing, a gait that is very seldom seen in England, while in Spain and Morocco it is extremely common. In fact, the Spaniards highly approve of it, believing that it shows both horse and rider to the greatest perfection ; nor is the American behind him in this taste, a good pacing hack being deemed by all as the most desirable animal for saddle purposes. Having shown, I think conclusively, the similarity in appearance and proclivities, between the American and the Barb, and further, how I account for the importation of the preponderance of Moorish blood in the western continent, I will endeavour to show the difference between the Barb and Arab, how our English stock, with few exceptions, takes after the latter, and that it is

from this difference of parentage we may attribute the superior speed in trotting of the American horse over our home-bred animals.

During an experience in the East that extended over three years, where I had the fortune to see every variety of Arab, from the pure-bred Medjid to the Persian, I never knew one that was a good trotter or was gifted with knee action; their paces are principally walking, galloping, and cantering, their movements being too close to the ground to excel in the trot. Nor can this be accounted for otherwise than from the great difference in the characteristics of the surface of the ground in Arabia and Barbary, and that nature with her wonderful forethought has adapted the gait of both races to the different surfaces over which they have to travel. If we are correctly informed, the districts of Asia, where the pure caste Arab is reared, is undulating, very sandy, and sparsely covered with vegetation; where the colt or mare can, without any fear of danger of interruption, lay well down to a gallop. But, on the other hand, Barbary is rough, rocky,

and mountainous, intersected with ravines, and in many portions thickly covered with shrubs. On such grounds it would be impossible for a horse to gallop with safety, the velocity of his movements would certainly cause him to come to grief, and the better to avoid this he trots, his legs being all under him, enabling him to halt or turn to one side or other with the greatest facility. Further, by raising his legs so high in this pace he saves his hoofs from coming in contact with stones and bush, at the same time giving him a better choice of where he will replace his feet. Adopting this action through numerous generations have developed those muscles which are most strongly brought into play, causing a change of shape; so that if the horses of Arabia and Barbary have a common origin, their difference of appearance can in some measure be accounted for.

So far I have been alluding to horses as trotters, that is to animals of such a height as would entitle them to that appellation. For a few moments I will take a glance at their more diminutive brethren the ponies. Who in England's metropolis



has not been surprised to see how they trot, it may be under the weight of a patrician youngster or fat butcher boy, in my lady's phaeton, or a grocer's delivery cart? Still they get over the ground at an amazing pace for such small quadrupeds, and much faster in proportion to their size and length of limb than their larger brethren. If we take up an English sporting paper and see any trotting events narrated or predicted, it is invariably ponies that are going to figure, and wonderfully good time the little ones make, exhibiting speed, stoutness and endurance that is truly wonderful. But where do the most of our ponies come from? Devonshire, Wales, Shetland, Orkney Islands, Connemara, the wilds of Donegal and Antrim. Now on the coast of each place mentioned portions of the Spanish Armada were wrecked; a large force of cavalry doubtlessly formed a part of that fortunately ill-fated expedition, and is it not more than probable that many horses reached the shore? If so, these ponies have Spanish blood, and by that link are connected with the Barb, their present diminutive size being the result of

severe climate, exposure, scarcity of food, and possibly want of housing in winter. The wild horse of America has also become smaller than his ancestors, but not to so great an extent, from his range lying many degrees of latitude nearer the Equator and his supply of food being much more abundant.

Further, all the above-mentioned places celebrated for ponies are rough, irregular, and rocky in their surface. Those who may be disinclined to acknowledge the Spanish origin or its connection with our ponies may be disposed to think their trotting action is induced from the same reason that I attribute to the Barbs, viz. nature adapting them to a pace which is most suited to the surface over which they have to traverse. Now this cannot be said for the American horse; the ground there is not stony and irregular in those portions where wild horses principally abounded—the magnificent flat savannahs or undulating prairies on the western side of the Mississippi; so that it may be safely inferred that trotting in the American horse has not been the

adopting of a pace better suited to his present home, but the retaining of a peculiarity inherent in his ancestors. This is a further proof of the connection existing between the transatlantic horse and the Barb, also an additional inducement for us to believe that British ponies have probably a large proportion of Spanish blood in their veins, and that from that source they obtain their excellence as trotters. I am aware that for some time great efforts have been made, more particularly at Exmoor, for the improvement of the original stamp of pony by the introduction of undersized Arab stallions. Success has been the result, and in England you frequently see ponies that are model race-horses, but, as a rule, the trotting proclivity does not exhibit itself in the beauties, but in the rough, shaggy, hardy, original breed, which not unfrequently more resembles mules, cart-horses, or even Newfoundland dogs.

In Australia, where racing has long been the favourite amusement, and where great attention has been paid to breeding, the proof of which is the excellent time made on their courses, fairly

rivalling the best we have on record, I never heard but of one nag that had gained a great reputation as a trotter. Now, in that colony a great number of Americans reside, and they, doubtless to gratify their favourite taste, if they could have found the material, would have had some steppers whose reputation would have reached the parent country. Now, it is a well-known fact that the horse is not indigenous to Australia, but that it was introduced from England, India, and the Cape—all three so far from Barbary and Spain that it is extremely improbable that a native of the last-named countries ever set foot upon her soil. In Australia there have been no remarkable trotters. To Australia I doubt if there has been any direct importation of the Barb. Englishmen have long acknowledged the excellence of their thoroughbreds to be attributed to the Arab cross; at the same time it must not be forgotten that many Arabs have been imported of which, as I have previously stated, the celebrated sire, the misnamed Godolphin Arab, was one; therefore a great many of our horses have Barb blood in their veins, but it is in the minority, the Arab being

esteemed the favourite animal, and consequently much more sought after when the foreign cross was deemed advisable for the improvement of our stock.

In conversing with many Americans on the subject of their crack trotters, and in what sires and families they found this pace best developed, to the English stallions Messenger and Mambrino, many years since imported into the United States, they gave the credit. Now, if any one will take the trouble to hunt out their pedigrees, they will find a stronger cross of the Barb (going back as far as the Godolphin and Barb mares) than is usually the case. Another stallion exported from England into Boston (Mass.), and who a long time stood in Long Island, near New York, called Bellfounder, or the Norfolk Trotter, has also produced a numerous progeny celebrated for this pace. Of his pedigree, although I used every endeavour, I could learn nothing; however, a friend procured me a print, said to represent him when performing the feat of trotting  $17\frac{3}{4}$  miles in the hour, and never did I see a picture more

remarkably represent an animal with the prominent Barb points.

To the difference in disposition and temper between the American and the English horse, to which I have alluded, much allowance must be made to the varied systems of breaking. The former, as a rule, commence to handle their youngsters at a very early age, almost making them pets, till they become so familiarized with man that when sufficiently old they go to work with the steadiness of old ones; while, on the other hand, the vice which we frequently see at home results from severity of treatment, or from the teasing of mischievous stable boys, or bad-tempered grooms, who are too frequently employed about our racing establishments.

A statement of the time made by some of the most celebrated American trotters I will here append, as it will doubtless be of interest to many; at the same time due allowance must be made that such is done from memory, I having unfortunately lost my records. Of one thing the reader may be certain, that if a mistake does

occur, it is only in the fractions of seconds. Flora Temple, one mile, on Kalamazoo course, Michigan, 2 min.  $19\frac{5}{4}$  secs. Dexter at Buffalo, N.Y., one mile in 2 min. 18 secs. Eathan Allen in double harness, trotting, with a running mate, on Fashion course L.I., one mile in 2 min. 15 secs., Dexter, his antagonist, being only two lengths behind at the finish, making his best time for a mile 2 min.  $16\frac{1}{2}$  secs. But within the last few years the above records have been beaten till the marvellous time of a mile in two minutes nine and a half seconds has been scored.

In conclusion, I will state that I believe that the superior speed of the American trotting horse to ours is entirely owing to his having a preponderance or greater portion of Barb blood in his veins than the home-bred English animal, and for a proof that the American has this preponderance I refer you to his origin.



## HINTS ON SHOOTING.

TO lay down rules by the observance of which the majority of bad shots may become experts is easy enough ; but the trouble is, however great the determination to follow the given precepts may be, as soon as game is flushed the advice of instruction is thrown to the winds, and bang, bang, go both barrels, as heretofore, with the same unsuccessful results. That more birds are missed by shooting too quickly than by any other means, I assert as a fact that is indisputable ; and knowing this to be the case, why will it continue to be practised ? For this reason, that many are so fearfully nervous that for the moment they lose control of their actions, or that they are so timid, that firing off their gun is a terrible ordeal which they have to go through, and the sooner it is accomplished the better. Neither of such pupils are

ever likely to become crack shots. I have a friend who is, without exception, the most unlucky shot—I was going to say the worst—that ever I met. We at one period very frequently shot together, and each evening, on our tramp home, he was certain to tell me that he had discovered the reason for his apparent want of skill. How various were the causes attributed would be beyond possibility of enumeration; however, he always devised some means of counteracting them—viz. by stuffing cotton in his ears, so as not to hear the spring of the game; to wear a loose collar, so that he could the better and more rapidly bring his head to the stock; to discard a waistcoat, for the thickness of cloth over his shoulder militated against bringing his gun rapidly up. However, he was always wounding birds—at least he said so; for constantly, if I was near, he would call out, “Don’t you see the feathers fly?” which, perhaps owing to my less keen vision, I never perceived, save it were the feathers flying off with the bird. Another peculiarity this gentleman possessed was, that although he might have dis-

charged the entire contents of his shot-pouch without bagging a single head of game, as soon as we both shot over the same point, one or other of the birds knocked down was due to his skill; doubtless companionship reassured him, or induced him to take more pains. I would advise such, therefore, always to shoot in company, only I would rather be excused becoming the company. Of course occasionally he would knock over a bird, but when this took place it either was lost or took no end of trouble to secure. I remember one instance, in a marsh where we were snipe-shooting, a number of mallards flushed within easy range; following the report of his gun, one of the greenheads left his companions, sailed round several times, each circle becoming lower and less contracted, till it dropped. Half an hour was fruitlessly wasted in search, my friend would not give up, so I went forward alone; some time afterwards he joined me, but his perseverance had not been rewarded. All that day he lamented over this lost bird, for, like many of our fishing friends, he doubtlessly thought it (because it was

not bagged) far larger and far finer than any obtained. The reason for so frequent a loss of the few birds he hit was this, the victim seldom received more than a stray grain of shot outside the disc described by the charge, and therefore was not seriously wounded. That there are many like my friend I know, and I fear it will be a hopeless task to endeavour to make them good shots; at the same time I think there are many bad shots who might be much improved.

I believe that too much importance cannot be attached to the stocking of your gun. Occasionally you will meet with men who appear to do equal execution with either a crooked, straight, long, or short stock; but such are rare, and when found you may feel certain that they have possessed unusual opportunities for constant practice. The length of a man's arm, neck, and conformation of shoulder are so various, that seldom will a gun come up alike to different individuals; the straight, tall figure wants a crooked stock; the short, stout person the reverse; and intermediate forms, the bend between both extremes. I once possessed

an excellent gun, with which I invariably acquitted myself creditably. The stock had always been an eyesore, for it was composed of bad wood, and the previous owner had chipped and scratched it so badly that, after lengthened hesitation, I determined to have it re-stocked. However, when it reverted to my hands from the gunmaker, I was surprised how indifferently I shot with it ; but, on examination, I found that the new stock was much straighter than the old. Again, being in a neighbourhood where game was abundant, where I did not have a gun of my own with me, I borrowed one from a friend, and my execution was so bad that before the day was over I gave up in disgust. This gun's stock was so straight that I doubt if any but its owner could use it. In having a gun made there is nothing that should receive from the gunmaker more careful attention than the figure of the purchaser ; for I feel confident that a very great deal of bad shooting is made through want of attention to this point. Again, a gun should never possess a superfluous ounce of metal that is not necessary to its safety. When we start in the

morning, fresh and vigorous, after a good night's rest, the weight may appear a trifle ; but in the evening, if the day's work has been severe—more especially on grouse moor or snipe bog—you will be surprised how little tells, and will induce you to undershoot your game.

Still another equally important point is the strength that is required to pull your trigger. After long practice you may get accustomed to either a very fine or very heavy pull, but whatever you are used to, that retain. With the tyro it is different. Through frequent experiment he should find out what weight of pressure he can give without disconcerting his aim at the precise moment when he has obtained the firing line of sight. By imparting this knowledge to his gunsmith he will commence shooting under great advantage. A great deal, we all know, depends upon a good start. It is equally applicable to life and shooting. If you begin under advantageous circumstances, success becomes probable. Success begets confidence, and with confidence we are certain to shoot well. An habitually bad shot has no confidence.

Constant failure makes him doubt his ability, his gun ; in fact, every portion of his shooting paraphernalia. Nearly all persons who do not shoot regularly fire their right barrel first. When such is the case your left should shoot the strongest, as the second shot is so frequently at longer range. A good workman, however, will use either indifferently, and by practice the tyro will succeed in doing so, so that one barrel may not become worn out sooner than the other. A fault which a great number are addicted to is using too much shot. An ounce of number seven, or any of the smaller sizes, is amply sufficient for a twelve-bore gun. However, if you have reason to use a larger grain, an eighth of an ounce more may be substituted. The reason for this is that the small packs the closer, and thus makes a more formidable resistance to the explosive power. For strong shooting, and therefore long shots, it is the driving force that is required, which you counteract by surplus lead, for friction is increased and power wasted in starting the charge.

Old hands may smile after reading the above,



and justly say, "The fellow has told us nothing new ;" but, remember, we are not all old hands, and that all were once beginners, for whose benefit these hints are given.

## A CHINESE MODE OF FISHING.

WHILE a pleasure party were descending the Thames lately, a large pike jumped on board the boat. The reason attributed is doubtless the correct one, but perhaps few readers are aware that in China it is a common practice to take fish in this way, viz. by inducing them to jump on board. I do not speak from hearsay, but have several times witnessed it, and will endeavour to explain how it is practised. The boat used is built for the purpose, excessively long, narrow, of light draught, and with the lowest possible freeboard. A plank about three feet high and almost the length of the boat, painted snow white, is erected fore and aft on one side or other, while on the reverse side from this board is attached to the gunwale of the boat a shelf

nearly the length of the boat, which gradually slopes to the water's edge, also painted white. When the weather is calm and the moon bright, a single fisherman starts on the river in this craft, always shifting the board and ledge so that the former will be on the far side of the boat from the moon. The fish see the moonbeams glancing off this white arrangement and, why I cannot say, jump at it, when they strike the board and fall into the bottom of the boat. On two occasions I examined the proceeds of John Chinaman's catch, and found it to be principally composed of grey mullet and a representative of the *perka* family. The Chinese, to all appearance, are a most stupid-looking lot, still they are wonderfully cunning in circumventing fish and game ; another instance of which is their training cormorants to assist them in taking fish.

## AMERICAN RUFFED GROUSE AND PARTRIDGE.

IN exceptional season the grouse shooting is an utter failure. A few years ago such were the results, so at times we find ourselves looking forward distrustfully to the future, hoping, but still doubting, that we shall again enjoy the sport which was usually awarded to our earlier experiences. This is a serious matter to those who have to keep up a staff of keepers, a large kennel, and, if not a proprietor, pay a heavy rent for his moor. Such an outlook is a dreadful state of affairs, enough to discourage the most ardent; for although he has disbursed liberally, still no returns can be obtained at all adequate to the outlay. The journey to Scotland has been so much time thrown away, and the relaxation and pleasure well earned, possibly after tedious

Parliamentary duties, becomes an incentive to disgust, annoyance, and disappointment.

From the heather let us look at the stubbles. Frequently accounts tally in the prospect of small bags being made among the partridges, and the extreme wildness of the birds. In this case we have not disease to lay the paucity of sport to, but probably a more than usually dry summer. Shooting in England will thus be seen to be a very uncertain amusement, for if the game should survive the numerous ailments of their infancy, our eccentric climate may still intervene, and however good the early prospects are, when the time for enjoyment comes, the sportsman has to be satisfied, after hours of unsuccessful tramping, with the information that the heat or wet, or a combination of both, is the cause that so indifferent a bag is made.

If our game birds are so susceptible of climatic effects, then shooting becomes an amusement that cannot be looked forward to with certainty. The best remedy to adopt under the above circumstances is to introduce foreign game, hardy in con-

stitution, suited to our country and the sportsman's wants. In time these strangers might be influenced by the disadvantages the home birds suffer from, but we would have variety, and the season that was unsuited to one species could scarcely be expected to be so to all. On the 12th of August, if the grouse fail, you have no shooting. On the 1st of September, if the weather has been too moist and the cold more than usually protracted, the partridges are so wild that indifferent sport can only be obtained. Now, if the ruffed grouse and American partridge were brought here, if you could not fill your bags with one description, you would with another ; better far is this than returning empty-handed, disappointed, and probably out of temper.

The reasons that induce me to select these American birds are that I believe they are in no way inferior to our own, that they are extremely hardy, withstanding with impunity the intense heat of the Southern States' summer, or the protracted winters of New England. Many I know have objected to them, because in the wildest

portions of that continent, where man is seldom seen, when flushed they will occasionally perch on trees, but this is not the case in the settled parts, where they have become acquainted with dogs and guns. In the Alleghany mountains, New York and Pennsylvania States I never remember such an incident taking place. Again, some assert that our country is too highly cultivated, which I deny, for the American partridge is only to be found in the neighbourhood of farms ; and I have been assured that this bird is more abundant now on the western end of Long Island, which is close to the city of New York, and more carefully cultivated than it was in days gone by, and the country more wild. The ruffed grouse, on the other hand, but requires irregular ground, plenty of water, and a fair proportion of timber, and they will attach themselves to a neighbourhood without straggling off for parts unknown, like the pheasant.

That the ruffed grouse will breed here there is scarcely room for doubt. I know that the American partridge has already done so, and that in a state of captivity ; but let the experiment of



acclimating the transatlantic birds be made—the cost at most would be but trifling—and, if successful, their importation could be gone into on a larger scale.

In America, over a great portion of the country, their partridge goes by the name of quail. The same delusion appears to have crept over here, so that this partridge is a quail is firmly believed by many Englishmen, and they, knowing that our bird is migratory, say that the American is the same, as a caution to those who might entertain an idea of making the experiment. The quail of Europe I know well; I have killed them in immense numbers in Spain, Italy, and Greece. Twenty years ago in the north of Ireland, when partridge shooting, I seldom would conclude a day without bagging several couple; so I have no hesitation in saying that these birds are totally different, not even belonging to the same family, so that what might affect the residence of one should not be entertained as an argument to prevent the introduction of the other.

## THE POWER OF A SHARK'S JAW.

EIGHT bells had only struck a few minutes, and the old watch had been relieved, when the captain came on deck and ordered a man into the chains to heave the lead and obtain correct soundings. For several days this order had been so frequently given that it attracted little attention ; and only that I happened to be lounging near the waist of the ship at the time, ruminating over a Manilla cheroot, I should not have been an eye-witness to the following incident.

The weather was thick, blustering, and wet. For a day or two we had been unable to obtain an observation, and as we were in a most dangerous part of the Chinese seas, it was necessary to be more than usually careful. Moreover, the barometer had suddenly fallen, a warning not to be

neglected during the typhoon season ; thus our cautious old Scotch skipper was not satisfied with bringing on deck the topgallant yards, placing the ship under reefed topsails, but had as further precautions the lead hove every half-hour. Although a long way off the coast, the singing chant of the leadsman had in the earlier watches proclaimed six fathoms, six and a half—shoal water, all will say, for the centre of a vast sea ; but for days between the Straits of Sunda and the mouth of the Canton river you may sail without wetting the knots that mark ten fathoms.

It may be necessary to explain, for the benefit of the uninitiated, that the deep-sea lead is a bar of that metal about two feet long gradually tapering from the base (which is about four or five inches in diameter) to the top, where the line is made fast. In the base is a deep indentation containing about a couple of pounds of lard, which coming in contact with the bottom informs the navigator (by the particles that adhere) of what formation the surface of mother earth is composed. The line which is attached is of various lengths (a hundred fathoms,

I think, was on this occasion), carefully coiled in a tub, so that nothing could prevent it being freely paid out.

Well, the lead was hove, and rapidly the line ran out ; five, six, seven fathoms were passed, still no stop,—on, on, till double that number slipped overboard, yet no indication of bottom. The captain looked surprised, but said nothing, till a third of the contents of the tub had gone, and then he uttered an exclamation very forcible, but far from polite. However, this did not alter matters, for soon scarce twenty fathoms were left. The seaman was now ordered to stop the line, and in doing so exclaimed, after a violent effort, that he was unable. Two or three turns round a belaying-pin soon settled this difficulty, and at length the lead was drawn on board. On being handled it was found to be very much cut ; so, to have a better inspection, it was transferred at once to the chart-room. On examination we found on the reverse sides a succession of furrows over half an inch deep, out of which we picked, with the point of the compasses, a number of broken fragments

of a large shark's teeth. The opinion of the majority was that the brute had smelt the fat and been thus induced to lay hold. From my knowledge of the habits of the fish, I believe it was attracted by the glitter of the metal passing rapidly through the water; under either circumstance, the rapidity with which it must have dashed through the water to seize its prey, is a proof of the agility with which some of the species of this genus are possessed. The amount of strength of jaw necessary to make such deep indentations on a bar of lead four or five inches in diameter, can scarcely be conceived possible in a cartilaginous fish. If this shark is still alive, I pity the sailor that chances to fall overboard in his neighbourhood.

## BLACK BASS AND MUSKALLONGE FISHING.

IN the memory of the past there are always reminiscences the recalling of which give us the greatest pleasure. Such is particularly the case with me when I think of the scenes and events which I am about to endeavour to describe. I was literally living on the confines of civilization, for there was but one residence further north than the house of which I was an inmate, and it was inhabited by a canny Scot, who never knew what it was to take a day's relaxation, his entire energy, early and late, being devoted to the improvement of his homestead. Shortly after my arrival I paid him a visit, but I found that information on shooting matters would have to be obtained through my own exertions ; for more than a complaint against Bruin occasionally depriving him of a pig, he knew literally nothing of the sporting capa-

bilities of his neighbourhood. It is always pleasant at a new field of operations to obtain a slight inkling of what you may expect. It is far from agreeable to have to substitute B B, or perhaps ball for snipe shot, small game being expected and large game found. The locality of which I am about to speak is at the extreme northern end of Lake Simcoe, close to the now Muscoco District, where one uninterrupted forest extends northwards for several hundred miles to the banks of the Upper Ottawa, except when an occasional lake or river occurs to break the monotony of this ocean of timber. In wandering about the neighbourhood of my temporary residence, several miles from home I came upon one of those beautiful little sheets of water so frequently found upon the northern portion of the American Continent. This soon became a favourite retreat, for duck were numerous on a portion where wild rice grew luxuriantly, and wood pigeons and spruce grouse had adopted it as a watering-place, owing to its freedom from intruders. All devoted admirers of nature know



what a pleasure it is to be alone where none of man's work mars the prospect, where every object the eye rests upon is as it came from the Creator's hands, unsullied and unchanged. As I sat on a rocky promontory to see the sun dip the horizon, perhaps visions of my distant land or far-off friends flitting before me, I was struck with the immense numbers of fish that kept breaking the unrippled surface—good evidence that the rod and line might find abundant work here, so on the next visit I determined to put it to the test.

To those who are acquainted with the birch-bark canoe it is needless for me to say anything. All the praises I could sound could not further enhance it in their estimation; but to those who are not, to them let me say that there is not in existence a more perfect piece of mechanism for the purpose it is intended. Only learn to handle it properly, and you can go in it anywhere, over shoals, down rapids, through channels where an oar would be useless, and finally, if necessary, you can take it on your shoulders and tramp across portages where nothing but an ox-team could

transport a boat. In construction they are models of skill, yet the Indian alone knows how to make them ; for although a white man may occasionally attempt their manufacture, they never do so perfectly. On the following day, with my birch-bark on my shoulders, looking like a gigantic animated letter T, I crossed the portage with a formidable array of lines and artificial baits, full of most mischievous intent towards the finny tribe. This day the surface was broken by that desirable ripple, whether it be for trolling or fly-fishing, and dark clouds occasionally lowered over the shadow they cast upon the face of the water. With exhilarating freedom deep I dipped my paddle, pushing for the rocky north end, waiting till I had crossed the centre of the lake before I commenced to fish ; for, as a rule, unless there should happen to be a reef, seldom any fish will be taken far from the margin. When alone in a canoe one line will be found as much as can be conveniently attended to, for the navigation of your craft requires both hands. Getting under good headway, I soon had twenty-five to thirty yards of line astern, with a few inches

of red cloth for lure, which proved so attractive that I almost immediately had a break, and in a moment or two afterwards a fish hooked. Of all plucky, determined fish, to Black Bass I give the palm, they are so thoroughly reckless in their efforts to escape ; first springing from the water, then possibly coming at you like a cricket-ball, giving you often more than you can do to get the line out of their way ; next dashing to the right or left, and only succumbing when exhausted nature refuses to do more. For two or three hours such was the sport which continued with never over a few minutes' cessation.

As I paddled slowly along the shore I came to a river previously unknown to me, and which I have since learned is the only outlet from this lake. The edge of this stream was fringed with a dense network of weeds, and the channel had scarcely a perceptible current. On coming full in view several dozens of mallards rose, conspicuous among whom were many of the beautiful wood duck, a gem among his brilliant-plumed race. What a pity at home we could not acclimatize this

bird, but I fear his migratory habits would sadly interfere. The sedgy nature of the shore here predicted pike, so, replacing the red cloth by a large Buell's spoon with some scarlet ibis feathers tied along the shanks of the hooks, I again tried my fortune. There are few who have not heard of the muskallonge, the king in stature of the pike family. It is to be found in nearly all the rivers and lakes of northern Canada. Among the shoals and rapids of "The Thousand Islands," on the St. Lawrence, it is said to attain an immense size, even eighty pounds ; but the largest I have seen did not exceed two-thirds of that weight. Such heavy fish as the above I had not on that occasion to deal with, but before I ceased the bottom of my canoe had a goodly show of bass and muskallonge ; so many, that I was satisfied to select three or four for present use and hide the others, with my birch-bark, till I could send across for them in the morning ; but a couple of bears, judging from the different sized tracks, got at my *caché* during the night, and had the bad taste to maul and pull about what they did not eat, so that I rejected the

remainder as unfit for food. Fish I have always found the most tempting bait with which to draw Bruin into a trap, so I built a bower-house and hung up the bait at the end of it, with my trap nicely covered with leaves ; still all would not do, he and his companions were too wide awake, or had left the neighbourhood. This lake I often visited again, and with equal success ; the influences of weather never appeared to affect the fishes' appetites, and they are always a welcome addition to backwoodsman's fare. In company of a Chippawa Indian, I also tried fishing through the ice. The method adopted is simple, viz. cutting a hole two or three feet in diameter, over which is built a small hut to keep out the light, and sufficiently large for the fisherman to sit inside, the end of his fish-spear protruding through the top. With an artificial minnow on a few feet of line in the left hand, and weighted so as to make it readily sink, you attract the pike to the surface, when, with a dexterous blow, you drive your leister home. Very much like poaching ; still, where fish are so abundant and wanted for food, this system becomes less culpable.

At the northern end of Lake Couchachin the beautiful Severn, after tumbling over a grand fall, starts on its erratic, precipitous course for Lake Huron. To visit this spot was not more than seven or eight miles of water, through a labyrinth of islands, and along the most picturesquely beautiful shore, wooded to the margin. Beside the fall was a saw-mill belonging to a descendant of the French aristocracy, who had emigrated during the days of "The First Empire." Whether or not the proprietor happened to be at home, a cordial welcome could be relied upon, and the fishing underneath the fall was always excellent—sometimes so good that your bait would scarcely touch the water ere it was seized. However, there was one drawback, for the spot was infested with snakes, particularly a large, thick, dirty-brown water species, which looked exceedingly venomous. From the indifference with which the mill hands treated them, I imagine their look was worse than their bite. They had, however, a *penchant* for minnow, for I saw one captured on the hook. When wild-fowl migrate this is a splendid

stand ; for if the weather is in the least stormy, with an indication of cold, the ducks keep passing all day, and their flight invariably is so low that they are well within range. By following the Severn down to its junction with Lake Huron plenty of occupation can be found for both rod and gun ; and the health that your open air life will impart will make your food taste superior to anything obtainable in civilized quarters.



## LIFTING THE TRAPS.

ON the north-west of the State of Maine exists a ridge of hills which divide it from the township of Success, in the State of New Hampshire. Whatever may have been the cause (rather the presumption of the namer—Yankee effrontery of the basest kind—in giving the place such a high-faluting sobriquet), it has remained as wild and unsettled as it was in the days when the whole country belonged to the red man. No, I make a mistake; a ruin of a tumble-down diminutive barn, on close scrutiny, may be found, for it is scarcely large enough to hold at a pinch a ton of hay. The area of this township is composed of an immense meadow (through which a clear but deep and sluggish stream flows) and the pine-clad slopes that divide it from the State of Maine. For some weeks I

had been residing eight or ten miles distant from Success. The person in whose house I stayed was a trapper during winter, when the inhospitable climate foiled any attempt at cultivating what at no season was a productive soil. Night after night with pleasure I listened to his stories of how he had run down this moose, shot that caabroo, or at length trapped the most troublesome of bears.

For some days my fly-rod had been indefatigably most successfully at work, furnishing not only my own table, but many of the neighbouring families with trout, so that a change of programme was far from unacceptable. One morning as I was deliberating in which direction I would go, my host asked me if I should have any objection to accompany him to lift some traps he had not visited since spring. The trip promised an acquaintance with a new beat, and an insight into what I was not as yet conversant with, in this section of the American continent, viz. the method followed for trapping martens. As the sun was rising over the eastern hills—these primitive people are early risers—we found ourselves about to leave the surveyed road.

My friend bore on his back a sack in which to place his long-neglected traps, while I carried my trusty ten-bore double gun, loaded by request with ball in one barrel and buck-shot in the other. Our route at first was through a dense cedar swamp, exceedingly irregular on the surface, while the undergrowth was so close that it was with difficulty parted ; a thick coating of moss was under foot, so spongy and full of water that if we remained stationary for a few seconds we would be over the insteps in water. Nevertheless, the presence of the American hare was indicated abundantly ; an animal, by-the-bye, which I believe very closely allied to the Scotch mountain hare, but slightly changed by climate and different habits of life, caused by the very dissimilar localities which they frequent. A blazed path was all we had for direction, but as both were in the full vigour of manhood, we steadily progressed. Several times we flushed the Canadian willow grouse, but as my projectiles were not suited to this stamp of game, and my companion continually kept informing me that larger might be looked for, I forbore troubling them.

From the swamp we got on drier soil, very rocky and densely wooded with pine—such glorious trees as might one day form, without discredit, the main-mast of a three-decker.

Upwards, like the youth who shouted “*Excelsior!*” we kept ascending, but we had not the maiden to warn us, but whose warning I doubt not, unless she had been unusually pretty, would have been disregarded. Soon the walking became climbing, and after an hour’s clambering the summit of the ridge was reached. Here the first trap was lifted, and at intervals of two hundred yards or so, according to the nature of the ground, the others were found distributed. As they had been down for nearly two months, whatever had been captured was in a decomposed state. Soon the whole had been gathered, over a dozen, when we descended to a stream literally alive with fish; trout of all sizes up to a pound appeared to be actually crowding each other, while our presence was totally disregarded by them. Lunch-time had arrived, and on the margin of the brook we enjoyed our meal; several of the trout which my companion

had taken with the most primitive tackle, and rod cut from the nearest tree, forming no inconsiderable portion of our tiffin.

After a smoke and half-hour's dawdle, we started on our return, following an entirely different route, still equally disadvantageous for rapid progression. During our homeward tramp I learned that martens could only be taken on the highest ridges, and that the bait used was either a red squirrel, the beautiful little cedar bird, or the heart or liver of the American hare. I was not a little surprised at the number of times my companion halted to inquire if my gun was all right, more especially as so far we had seen no indications of large game, excepting some broken-up or moved logs, and scratched trees where Bruin long since had been searching for insects or stretching himself. As the sun set we once more regained the path, well fatigued with our rough and protracted tramp, myself not a little disgusted that I had seen nothing sufficiently large to be worthy of considering fit game for the heavy missiles which both my barrels contained ; in fact, I could not help openly

grumbling that I should have been inveigled into such a useless journey. To this I got the information that "I might thank my stars we had got back safe." With this answer for the time I had to be satisfied, but that evening the mystery came out, and the selfish motives that had dictated my companionship being sought. I will endeavour to state the story as told by the trapper:—

"Last April, when the snow was on the ground, I laid out the traps we have to-day lifted. The travelling was very bad at the time, for it was near the break up of winter. I got along the ridge all right ; but as I thought the walking would be better to return as I had come, I determined to retrace my steps. I had scarcely turned about when I found, to my surprise, the print of an animal following my old track. I looked in every direction to see where the follower could be, but was unable to detect him. However, I know well that the skulking villain was no other than a painter (*anglicè*, puma) ; and as I had only my old single-barrel loaded with bird-shot, I became justly scared. All of a tremble, I started for home, and you may bet I made tracks. The

very evidence of the brute following me showed he was after no good, and I was right ; for as I drew near the outside edge of the swamp I saw him right ahead ; but I went out of my way and clear of big timber to avoid him. After I left the wood I heard him howl, doubtless in anger because he had missed having me for supper."

At the time I could not help thinking that my host had been needlessly alarmed, and told him so, when he informed me that nothing would have induced him to return alone—in fact, that he would sooner have lost his traps than do so ; that a painter in those regions, more especially in winter, was much to be dreaded, and in corroboration informed me of a little tragedy that occurred some years past in the same neighbourhood. Two friends once trapped the township of Success. They had two beats, running in reverse directions, while the shanty in which they both lived together was situated equally distant from each. The one who examined the traps to the north to-day visited those to the south to-morrow, changing their routes with each other daily, and always meeting at night at



their common residence. Almost half the season had thus passed away, when the trapper who had returned for the night became seriously alarmed at the continued absence of his friend. At length the little cur dog who constantly accompanied the missing man came home alone. There is an end to everything, and so there is to a long winter night ; and with the earliest indications of day he sallied forth to find the missing trapper, whom he found dreadfully mangled and partially eaten. The assassin had been a painter. The tracks on the tell-tale snow spoke correctly. About thirty feet above where the corpse lay an immense limb ran out at right angles from the parent tree. From this the skulking coward had doubtless sprung upon the unsuspecting man.

That the puma has attacked and killed human beings is well corroborated ; but, fortunately, he is such a cowardly, skulking scoundrel that he seldom makes the attempt.

## STRANGE FISH IN CALAIS, MAINE.

THE strange fish lately caught on the coast of the State of Maine, and dubbed the shark dog-fish by some of the learned in those regions, I have little doubt from the description given in American periodicals is the basking-shark, for these reasons : that the basking-shark has been found on the Newfoundland banks not far from that neighbourhood ; that the basking-shark is the only proper fish with which we are acquainted that grows to this gigantic size, thirty-three feet long ; that it could not belong to the whale family, or the inhabitants of that section of the coast, from their long experience and connection with the whale fisheries, would have recognized it, and given it either its proper name or a local one recognizable ; and that from its being so excessively like an

ordinary white or blue shark, with which the American coast abounds. To make the name more telling or characteristic, it is christened with a Christian name or surname, each of different species of the same genus. Don't laugh at the Yankee misnomer; remember the tunny that was melted down into an albacore by some of our educated fellow-citizens and accepted natural historians. But still the most important part of the mystery remains unexplained. The pectoral fins of the basking-shark have an elongation of a different colour and texture from the upper part of these fins, which, if broken, would look excessively like a flipper on a small scale. If the carcass had been knocking about on the coast for some time before it was stranded, is it not very possible that this fragile portion of the pectoral fins would get broken? and hence the fractured members, in the imaginative minds of the country people, are supposed to be intended to perform the functions of feet. It has long been believed that the basking-shark lives principally on marine vegetable matter, although, on dissection, one was

found to contain a portion of a mangled crab. In my opinion a desire for romancing or attaching mystery to a strange animal has induced the good people of "away down east" to exaggerate the most striking peculiarities.

P.S. Since writing the above, I inspected the subject of my communication, and found it to be a basking-shark. But Mr. Barnum had had its pectoral fins inflated until they looked like a terrestrial animal suffering from elephantiasis.

## RENCONTRE WITH A BEAR.

IN America a bear story and a snake story are to the generality of listeners synonymous to crammers. Knowing such to be the case, a man cannot help approaching this subject without nervous feelings, particularly when a bear figures as one of the principals among the *dramatis personæ* of the narrative. But it matters not; travellers appear to be born to be doubted. I do not hesitate to say that they will sometimes romance, but invariably the fiction portion is credited and the reality ignored. We do not need to look at the experience of modern times, our forefathers were impregnated with the same spirit; *vide* the reception poor Bruce received after his incredible hardships in Nubia and Abyssinia.

A friend in the true sense of the word, and

myself went to visit a small lake that was reported to swarm with trout. Both, I believe, were under the impression that no such place existed, but as a tramp through the woods was never objectionable we determined to set the matter at rest. An old lumberman, long superannuated, gave us our instructions thus: "First go through the woods two miles north, then incline a little to the westward, and after about half an hour's walking through a swamp you will strike a small brook, which follow up and you will certain sure make the pond."<sup>1</sup> To those who have not wandered through an American forest such instructions will be perceived to be far from lucid; to the thorough woodsman, however, it will be sufficient. Before we left the township road where we were to branch off there stood a shanty, at which we halted to put up the horse and buggy in which we had thus far travelled. From the head of the establishment we made inquiries, who, calling to his son who was within, gave the following directions—"Bub,"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Small lakes in Maine are always called ponds.

<sup>2</sup> A Yankee father's familiar way of addressing his son; daughters after the same manner are called "Siss."

take the folk and show them the pond." Now "Bub" was a most communicative youngster about fourteen years of age, and, scenting a dollar in the distance, hopefully undertook the job. A cow-path we, the trio, followed for more than a mile; then we continued on what is familiarly designated a blaze road—*id est*, a path marked out by a tree, at every hundred yards, more or less, having a piece scooped out of its bark. The walking was as bad as possible, for constantly we were delayed by giants of the forest who had been prostrated by the gales of preceeding winters. At length, tired and frightfully worried by mosquitoes, we reached a brook eight or ten feet in diameter, but deep and sullen as a canal; down this we pursued an erratic course till between two lofty bluffs we came upon a beautiful sheet of water of an area of about forty acres. To fish it from the banks was impossible, for the shumach and birch grew to its margin, so that no other resource was left but to cut a number of cedar logs and form a raft. An hour or more was lost in this operation, and when we had launched out, we found that nothing but the



smallest fry could be taken, although these were in such quantities that frequently we would have three or four rises to a cast. For an hour or more we fished indefatigably, still nothing over a quarter of a pound rewarded our labours, and when we landed for our pic-nic lunch I determined to explore the stream with the hope of obtaining some heavier specimens. My friend, who felt indisposed, either from the effects of the sun, or some State-of-Maine whisky (which is warranted to kill as far as a six-shooter), which he had been imbibing, refused to accompany me; so, with the youth who had acted as Palinurus, I left him to ruminate over his transgressions or misfortune.

As I had supposed, large fish were to be found in the stream, and my basket began to groan under its weight, when I hooked my flies in the top of a larch that leaned over the water. With all my efforts I could not get them free, so, sending the lad aloft, I waited patiently for him to cast them off. The place where I stood was hummocky, such lumps as you come across in the bogs of

Ireland when snipe-shooting, only a great deal larger. With care and precaution the tufts could be traversed without wetting a foot, but hurry would certainly get you between them, when over the boot-tops would be the consequence. I had stood for several minutes for the youngster to get the line loose, when across the stream, but a short distance off, I heard an animal grunt; the spot whence the sound issued was a large clump of whortle-berries, where some fallen timber lay. Not being quite certain that my ears had not deceived me, I waited, when the noise was repeated. By this time my line was free, and my juvenile companion was descending, when I asked him to listen to the noise, for I felt convinced that it emanated from no other than a bear feeding on his favourite *bonne bouche*, the blue berries. Young America listened; Bruin gave another grunt of evident satisfaction, when the former—exclaiming “Bear!”—slid down the tree with such agility as would have put in shade the majority of monkeys. As soon as he had reached the ground, off he started down stream, but the funniest part of all was that

my guide, in the precipitancy of his movements, must have tripped over the hummocks at least half-a-dozen times in a dozen strides. When we had got thirty or forty yards off—for I followed, though scarcely as rapidly—my *amour propre* asserted itself, and I halted ; not so my companion ; soon he disappeared through the labyrinth of shrubs, and I remained alone. To my relief, I found no bear was in pursuit, so, placing my rod against a stalwart hemlock, I ascended its branches to take a view of the situation ; for a long time I could not discover Bruin, but at length detected a large mass of black fur, accompanied by two smaller ones, busily employed feeding. They had quitted the wet ground, and were on the edge of an acclivity, where the mother was most industriously drawing the broken fragments of shattered logs on one side, while her hopeful progeny feasted upon the beetles and ants thus exposed. The old lady had neither winded nor heard us, and she remained sedulously pursuing her avocation, perfectly ignorant that her industry and strength were forming a subject of admiration for a son of Adam.

At length their search for insects took them out of sight, and I descended to join my companions.

The day by this time was far spent, and neither of us having arms suitable for an assault upon the happy family, we determined to seek the settlement and revisit the scene on the morrow. Next day, at an early hour, with quite a reinforcement, all armed with most formidable firearms, from the Spencer rifle to the old smooth bore, and accompanied by a well-tried bear dog, we sallied forth. For miles we tracked Madam Bruin, by the broken fragments of decayed timber and the numerous logs she had disturbed from their original resting place. Finally, we thought she could not be far distant, and the dog was untied ; off he went like a thunderbolt, and in a quarter of an hour we heard him baying vociferously. Guns were looked to, the men most energetic previously now dropped behind, doubtless to examine their trusty rifles and see that the powder was up in the nipples ; but when we reached Watch, what was our disgust, of course, to find that he had tree'd a covey of

Canadian partridge? ' Unwillingly we went to work, and decimated this unhappy and unconscious brood, nor could all our efforts afterwards induce the unfailing bear-dog to take up the desired track ; intensely disgusted we all returned, and bear-meat and bear-hunting for a long time were subjects that few of the would-be hunters liked to hear mentioned by the residents of the village, for there was a strong suspicion that what was said on these subjects was said in chaff.

Willow grouse.

## IDEAS ON FLY-FISHING.

TO those who have gained skill from constant practice in the gentle art I do not address my remarks ; still, they can read if they will, provided they will do so in good temper, and furnish beginners with such minutiae as have been forgotten, or have not been told. I fancy I hear numbers dissenting from my proviso, for it was only through long months, ay, years of toil—we may also say pleasure—they gained the information on fly-fishing which they now possess, and, therefore, why impart the result of their study to Tom, Dick, and Harry? But if our forefathers through generations had held back their views and experiences, for such selfish reasons, do you suppose the machinist, the naturalist, the navigator, etc., etc., of the days in which we live, would be as proficient as they are in

their respective trades or sciences? For all Izaak Walton states, I much fear the followers of the rod and line possess the quality of selfishness. As one of its votaries, I can well remember keeping buried in my own bosom the position of pools, the colour of flies, etc., where I was either certain of taking the largest fish, or by the use of which I could almost guarantee myself good sport. But I trust I no longer possess this love of self, and in no better way can I prove it than by endeavouring to teach the young idea, not how to shoot, but how to fish. Come forward, ye also who have experience, and help me in my task.

But to commence, we will first allude to the implements. The fly-rod, like the gun, cannot be too light, as long as it possesses the requisite strength. This is even a greater desideratum in the former than in the latter, for there is no convenient resting position in which you can occasionally carry it; while on the river it is incessantly at work, not even the respite for loading being granted, and if a heavy gun after a hard day's work will make you undershoot your game, a



heavy rod will make you a sluggard at evening in striking your fish, and the result will be about similar in both instances. For the trout fisherman—he, I mean, who fly-fishes burns and rivers—from ten to eleven feet is quite sufficient length for his rod to be (lake fishermen frequently use longer, but what they gain in reach they lose in quickness, a loss, in my estimation, of most serious importance), and such an implement should not exceed in weight eight or nine ounces. I can imagine I see many cast up their eyes, and exclaim that such is impossible to procure, but let me say they are mistaken. I have owned several of that weight, and with them, days in succession, taken baskets of fish, of not only all the ordinary sizes, but on one occasion a trout nine pounds in weight. As I cannot help regarding this as a performance to be proud of, I will relate how it took place. A couple of companions and myself were encamped on the margin of Mad River, in Oxford County, State of Maine. Our guns had failed to provide dinner, so, taking a hazel wand, I essayed to capture sufficient chub to make a *chowder*, a description of

*omnium gatherum* stew. In capturing a small fish, as I was about lifting it into the canoe, a large trout rushed from underneath the birch-bark, seized the chub, and although I gave him both line and time to pouch what had not been intended for a bait, on taking a pull upon him the chub came away, and I was free from the larger antagonist. Having taken sufficient small fry, I went home brooding over my misfortune, but keeping the adventure closely locked in my own bosom (selfishness again). About the hour that the sun began to dip behind the giant western pines, I had made up my mind to the course I would pursue, which was to take my pet rod, mount a cast of two flies, and carefully whip the pool from end to end. As if it were but yesterday, I remember distinctly the flies. The trail one was ginger-coloured cock's hackle, with light corn-crake wing, tipped with silver; the dropper a large-sized moth.

"For work at that hour," I hear some internally mutter, "the moth did the business." No, it did not; cock's hackles of all shades may invariably be backed against the field, and the cock's hackle on

this occasion kept up its reputation. Down on my knees in the bow of the canoe, the camp-keeper holding her back by a pole in the stern, slowly and cautiously I fished the throat, from thence down into the less angry but wider-spread current, which just as my flies passed over an eddy that divided the downward flow from the backwater, there was a splash rapidly responded to by a nervous quick movement of the wrist, which planted the hook firmly home. I doubt if I exaggerate, in fact I think I scarcely state enough, when I say that thirty minutes elapsed before my trophy could sufficiently endure the sight of a landing-net to have it placed under him. Thus was taken the largest river (*Salmo fario*) trout I ever caught. But to my rod ; it was made out of cedar from butt to tip, did not exceed nine ounces, and was the most lively, quick, light casting treasure I ever used. Cedar fly-rods I have heard objected to, because they are brittle ; doubtless you may find them so, and your casting-line also, if you change its use into that of a carriage whip. However much I admire a cedar rod, I do not think it suited for a tyro, but when the beginner

has gained experience, and is able to offer an opinion and use a fly-rod as it should be used, I doubt not he will perfectly agree with me. A cedar rod can seldom be purchased ready made, as tradesmen dislike the job ; so if any reader of "Gun, Rod, and Saddle" should wish to possess one, he had better go to the very best workman he knows of, and give him the order.

Next to the cedar rod, but one that will stand any amount of fair work, is the split bamboo ; this, I think, can be procured even lighter than the former. There is a firm in Maiden Lane, New York, who made this a *specialité*. I never had the fortune to use one, but have handled them often and listened to the raptures of experts on their merits ; on their good qualities I believe I can say nothing that they do not deserve, but their price is necessarily high, from the care with which the cane has to be selected and put together.

When I was a boy I believed Flint and Martin Kelly, both of Dublin, before all other makers. I have used their rods over a great portion of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and did not, until I

used the cedar rod, believe that any rod ever was made that could compete with theirs ; but so it is, and so it will continue to be. Old bluff-bowed lumbering packet-ships sufficed our fathers to go to India ; now we have the P. and O. service, with canal through the Isthmus, and it is far from probable that this means of transit will always suit our children. If Joe Manton were to rise among us, I doubt much if he could hold his own among modern gun-makers.

Some persons, particularly Irish fishermen, are attached to double-action rods ; that is, rods which have so much elasticity in them that they display two movements, one up and the other down, when suddenly used. I do not like them, for more than one reason ; the movement of the wrist in striking the fish, while raising the butt, throws the tip down, thus giving quite a contrary motion to what is intended. Again, if you have to fish against the wind, they will not only be found most difficult to manage, but excessively fatiguing. There is a rod made in Castle Connell (principally for salmon), after the above pattern ; it has many admirers, who doubtless through experience have become proficient in its

use ; still I can speak only from what I know, and my verdict is, leave them to their present advocates.

A combination rod has always been my horror. I mean such as fishing-tackle shop proprietors guarantee to be both a perfect fly and bait rod only by altering the tip. If persons will but use their brains, they can in a moment see that such is impossible. The two uses are essentially different, requiring the spring and elasticity in totally different parts. The act of placing a dull, lumbering tip on the first three joints of a delicate pliant trout rod is really desecration. However, some may say, you will find a medium between the two more generally useful. My answer is, what is worth doing is worth doing well ; and if your intent is fly-fishing, the most perfect rod for that purpose should be selected. If the river is so discoloured or swollen that bait has to be resorted to, or you must go supperless to bed, for goodness' sake go and cut a hazel wand, unless you carry a bait rod—an article for capturing trout that no true fisherman ought to be proud of. In fact, I am not certain that its possession should

not entitle the owner to be arrested, in the same way as a pocketful of snares for game would a known poacher. Hybrids, whether in rod or gun, are to be carefully avoided. I remember being once entrapped into using a hybrid gun, in the township of Markham, Upper Canada. Going through some brush, I flushed a quantity of woodcock. I stated the circumstance when I returned to the farm-house where I was residing. As I had no gun with me, the host offered me the use of his, which, from his description, was worthy of a royal duke, and therefore I accepted the offer. On production it proved to be half shot-gun, half rifle—that is, the right-hand barrel was smooth, the left rifled. This was my first experience of such a weapon, and most probably my last. The game was found, the cover was close, and snap shooting necessary. It was of no use. The gun would not come up, or the game come down. The fact was, that the shot barrel was only half the weight of the rifled, consequently the whole fabric was lopsided and without balance, and, do what I would, my aim was invariably incorrect.

Of the joints used in fly-rods the plain-sliding



one is probably the most convenient. If properly fitted, it should never jamb or work loose ; but if I lived on a river, I should never make use of any other than the simple splice, for the lashing affects the action of the spring less ; and if a few additional moments are lost in putting it together, the return is ample recompense. But I fear the age is too fast for its adoption.

Having given my thoughts upon the rod, I will now go to the reel. Of late years, at least since I was a boy, all kinds of mechanical inventions and appliances have been used to produce a more perfect reel ; there are now to be obtained stop reels, multiplying reels, and reels with as many internal cog and other wheels as would start a clockmaker's business. Of these complicated apparatuses beware, for they are fraught with disappointment and vexation of spirit ; the old simple click reel is the only one that deserves the honour of being attached to a fly-rod. Still, too much care and attention cannot be devoted to their construction. Every screw and joint should be as perfectly finished as those of a gun from a first-class

manufacturer. The barrel of the reel should be wide in proportion to its length, for you thus gain power or give line with greater freedom ; nothing is more unsightly or more awkward than a long narrow-barrelled reel. Brass is the metal usually employed for their construction, but the newly-invented aluminium bronze is infinitely to be preferred, for it does not corrode or discolour with the action of the atmosphere, and it is less liable to suffer from a blow or a fall ; mischances that the fly-fisher's paraphernalia, more particularly in a rocky mountainous country, are especially liable to when following the course of a trout brook, for stones will be slippery and of treacherous foundation. Who among our expert salmon or trout fishermen cannot remember having obtained a frightful cropper when precipitously following up or down stream a heavy fish he was fast to ? I do not require to tax my memory greatly to recall half-a-dozen such casualties.

There are various methods of attaching the reel to the rod. Of none do I approve so highly as that by which the reel is held fast in a shallow slout

by a movable band. In those cases where the butt is pierced, or the reel held on the rod by a brass band attached to it, which closes with a screw, the nuts are constantly getting lost or loose, through the thread of the screw becoming worn out ; moreover, the hand not unfrequently gets chafed by coming in contact with them.

On the subject of fly lines there is a great diversity of opinion. Of whatever materials they are composed, they should taper. Hair and silk I was at one time much in favour of ; but, after a lengthened trial, I found an insuperable objection—the two materials had not the same amount of elasticity, so that a heavy strain would bear more severely on one than on the other, which, as a matter of course, much reduces its strength. A plaited silk line, which has been submitted to a process of varnishing, rendering it impervious to water, will, I think, do the greatest amount of work, and throw the greatest length of line ; but for delicate, light, fine fishing, nothing I know of can surpass the old-fashioned one, composed entirely of horsehair ; for they are possessed

of more vitality and quickness. In the selection of one of these, every foot should be carefully examined and tested, for a careless, slop-shop workman will frequently work in short and worthless hair, possibly in the centre, which will destroy the whole fabric; for if the line be once broken it is useless. It matters not how much ingenuity and time you spend over the splice. For a day or two it may pass through the rings, but the friction will wear it rough, and it will catch, sooner or later, most probably when you are with a large fish, for then the strain is greatest. Can anything more disgusting be imagined than taking the last look at eight or ten yards of your line, perhaps more, rapidly disappearing in the eddying stream with your casting line and flies acting as advance guard? The thought of such a catastrophe is enough to make a man's blood run cold.

Casting lines should also taper, and, provided the gut is good, can scarcely have too fine a termination. Although a great many disciples of the rod always purchase these ready made, every fisherman should be able to knot one for himself.

The process is simple. Select your hairs—coarse ones for the top, fine ones for the bottom—steep them for some minutes in water as warm as the hand can conveniently bear, then knot them together, increasing or diminishing gradually in size according to the end you have commenced at. Care must be taken that such a knot be used as there is no slip in. The safest I know of is formed thus: take the ends to be joined and place them alongside one another, then take one end and make a single hitch by doubling it back and passing the end through the loop, which pull tight. Do the same with the reverse end, when by pulling on the line both will slip together, the strain having the tendency to tighten the knot. After cutting off the surplus ends, a few turns of very fine silk to whip them down and the smallest quantity of varnish will add much to the appearance of the line. There is no amusement that I know of in which it is so requisite for the follower of it to know how to make use of his hands and his ingenuity. Bad luck, or whatever you choose to call it, may, before an hour's fishing be

done, reduce you to the alternative of either ceasing work or manufacturing out of broken fragments a new casting line. Very possibly this is caused by the fish being more than usually on the feed. How disagreeable to be compelled to halt!—better far to spend ten minutes with the dry end of gut in your mouth, the more rapidly to render the hairs fit for knotting, and to know how to put them together afterwards.

The rings upon your rod should be large and not too numerous; five are sufficient for the lower joints, and about five more for the tip, supposing it to be a rod ten feet in length and in three pieces. In America I lately saw rods ringed on both sides, so that if after trying work and constant use a tendency to warp was evinced, you alter your reel to the reverse side and thus counteracted it. However, the better plan, I should say, would be to use the reverse sides day about. The only objection to this double arrangement of rings is additional weight, but that must be very trifling.

Having now described the rod, the reel, the line, and the cast, I approach a subject that I hesitate

to touch, viz. fly-tying, for I do not believe that any one can become an expert but through constant practice, after having received a few elementary lessons from an adept. I think that I can tie a fair fly ; but how long do you suppose it was before I reached my present excellence ? Years ; and even now I discover wrinkles and new methods of which I was not previously aware ; however, one rule may be laid down : never to take a turn of the silk round your hook without purpose, or without giving it sufficient strength to keep it in its place and perform the duty intended. The most important part is the simplest and first, the securing of the gut to the shank of the hook. Unless this is attended to, all your labour is vain and worthless—so much time thrown away and wasted. Here comes all the strain, and a thoughtless turn or two will cause nought but disappointment. Some anglers, particularly Irish ones, place the wings on so that the feather points from the hook, then double them back and tie them down. In this method much practice is necessary to form a handsome head ; but its advocates claim



for it strength. However, I have so frequently found the silk slip, and the feathers consequently point in the reverse direction, that I unhesitatingly condemn the practice. To make a handsome and serviceable fly, I have always followed the method of putting the wings on separately, care being taken not to injure the pile of the feathers; and this should be done last, the most minute drop of varnish being used over the silk when the head is finished off. My first effort to tie a fly turned out a thing like a humming-bird, my second like a humble bee, and so on till I have succeeded in making a good imitation of a gnat. Patience and perseverance have done this, and none will ever excel in fly-tying without exercising these qualities, so essentially useful in every walk in life. As a rule, the bigger the river, the more water it contains, and the more boisterous the weather, the larger are the flies used; but in summer, when the streams and burns have become clear and low, the smallest sizes must be resorted to, thrown with the lightest line, from the most unobservable and most sheltered position.

Three flies, their colouring and component parts, that I have found successful on almost all waters and at every portion of the open season, I will describe ; in fact, I have so much faith in them that I invariably use all three in making my first essay on an unknown river, viz. the red hackle, hare's ear and yellow, and black hackle. In America, on the small trout brooks, I found them equally attractive, evidence of a similarity of taste in fish on the Eastern and Western Continents. Fly No. 1, the red hackle, body composed of rufous wool, twisted in with tying silk, lower portions of body to be fine, gradually increasing in thickness till the shoulder is reached. Shoulder of bright red cock's hackle, the colour that is obtained in a natural state from the domestic fowl—game fowls generally producing the finest—but if those from the East Indian jungle cock can be obtained, you will possess the very best. Wings put on separately, and obtained from the wings of the corn-crake, shot immediately previous to their autumnal migration. Fly No. 2, hare's ear and yellow ; this has a tail composed of two strands from the

larger feathers of the guinea-fowl, body composed of the short mottled hair off the ears of a hare, mixed with fine mohair, of any of the intermediate shades from straw colour to olive. The mohair should be cut short, so that it will the better mix with the hare's ear. This dubbing must also be tied in with the silk, and the fly should be large at the shoulder. No hackle in this specimen is required. The wings are from the large wing feathers of the fieldfare, each placed on separately. Fly No. 3, black hackle; body of blue wool or mohair, finished at termination with a couple of turns of silver tinsel, black hackle from domestic fowl for shoulder, with the wing composed of the feathers either from tail or wing of the water-hen. The angler had better be provided with various sizes of these, as rivers are not always in the same condition, and weather is variable. For me to say that other flies will not kill better on some rivers, or at least equally well, would be absurd, but those described I have found most generally useful. A handsome and frequently very killing fly at times, particularly in blustering weather, is made of the

following material. Body of two of the longest and most rufous strands of a feather from a brown turkey; these strands to have the fingers pulled up them, so as to cause the fine edges to stand out; then wrapped firmly on. Shoulder of brown cock's hackle, with brown grouse feather for wing. In autumn, particularly if the stream should be clearing after a flood, I have known this fly to be most effective. However, it is no bad plan, if you are a stranger in a neighbourhood, to get hold of a poor honest disciple of Izaak Walton, who will give you information, and very probably sell you some of the contents of his book. However, beware that he does not palm off upon you the *débris* of his collection. Except for sea-trout fishing, the brilliant and many-coloured macaw-like compositions are totally useless in our inland streams, so let not love of gaudy colouring or the advice of inexperienced persons induce you to spend your time and money on such fabrications.

We will suppose the novice accoutred with all that money and judgment can obtain in the shape

of tackle and rod, at the same time hoping that his garments are composed of those sober quiet colours that are least observable; for whether in shooting, deer-stalking, or fishing, attention to this is all-important; that he wears nought that is not useful, and not like the Laocoon, as I once observed a young gentleman, so covered was he with straps and bright-coloured strings suspending lunch-box, and flasks, and innumerable other contrivances, the very weight of which must have impeded his movements and fagged him to death long ere the day was over. He is on the river's margin, at a spot free from bush, rock, or other impediment. The rod is carefully put together (I hope it is a spliced one, for I shall have more hope for the beginner's ultimate success from this choice), the reel is attached, the line drawn through the rings, and the cast and flies are carefully taken off his hat, round which they have been wrapped to make them more subservient and less obstreperous on commencing work), and made fast to the line. Ere an attempt at the first cast is made take one word of advice. Englishmen are so

horsey in their proclivities that they invariably consider a rod, when first they handle it, an instrument to be treated and used in exactly the same manner as a carriage whip. From boyhood upwards they have been used to the latter, and the Englishman's hand has obtained wonderful cunning in cracking the same. Now, the two motions are essentially different; the one is performed by the quickest possible jerk, the other by making the widest possible sweep, as free from angles as the turns on a racecourse. Get this information so grafted into your brain that you will not be likely to forget yourself, for on each occasion of this forgetfulness, you will pay a penalty by being minus a fly, probably the trail one. I have known some persons so skilled in snapping off flies, even although possessed of considerable experience, that their custom must have been of no small advantage to the tradesman who supplied them with tackle.

Supposing the angler is facing a river which he is desirous of throwing across. The rod being held in the right hand, gradually, but with increas-

ing velocity, raise your rod from left to right ; when the line is straight out from you, make a sweep, and bring the flies down upon the water with a half circular motion of the hand. This last movement will raise the slack of the line and cause the trail fly to strike the water first, which should always happen. When this first lesson is thoroughly learned with the left hand, it should then be practised up and down stream ; when, with perseverance and attention, such precision may be gained that the fisherman can place the flies at every effort within an inch or two of the desired spot. If the sweep mentioned be not made, then you will snap your flies off, not improbably with a report rivalling a whip in the hands of an expert coachman.



## STRONG SHOOTING.

Do guns of this day shoot better than those manufactured fifty years ago? The reason why I propound such a question is, that I hear and read of birds being killed steadily at seventy and eighty yards, of trap-shooting being practised with a thirty-five yards' rise, and the performers scoring four out of five. I never lived in a neighbourhood where it was not reported that there was a wonderful shooting gun, but I never have had the fortune to see any of them perform their unprecedented feats; either the shooter's nerves were out of order, or the powder was bad. How unfortunate it is that powder will so often be bad, more especially wood and smokeless compounds, more particularly when it is desirable that it should be excellent. When I hear sportsmen, notably young gentle-

men, narrate the performances of their double barrels, I cannot help commiserating myself, that I have never been able to obtain better than a third-rate article for my use, for I have heretofore thought the gun which killed reliably at fifty, and with considerable certainty at sixty yards, was as near perfection as obtainable. I do not mean to say that occasionally a snipe, or even a duck, has not been turned over at seventy yards, still at such ranges I have always thought the odds very much in favour of the birds. As none of my old battery can accomplish more than above stated, before I go abroad again it would be desirable to obtain a modern gun, yet I should not like to adopt a new favourite, which would shelve an old, without first seeing it perform; but if the new invention will kill steadily at seventy with ordinary gunpowder, such as Curtis and Harvey's, I shall not have a moment's hesitation on the subject of obtaining it; therefore I ask, do modern guns shoot much better—say thirty per cent. better—than those produced fifty years ago?

## IDEAS ON DOG BREAKING.

How many that would have turned out good men and useful members of the community have been ruined in their youth through not being understood, and possibly treated with undue severity? How many promising colts, perfect in general appearance, have turned out runaways, apt to shy, and possessed of every failing it was possible for horse-flesh to learn, therefore, irrecoverably ruined through the bullying and barbarity of the trainer? As men are ruined, as colts are ruined, so are a preponderating percentage of our pointers and setters. My old dominie used habitually to go about with the end of his strap hanging out of his pocket ; no ordinary strap, but what the reader may imagine a couple of feet cut off an omnibus trace would be, terrible to behold by such as were fond of

toffey, or encased in tight-fitting trousers. And then the possessor of this strap was no puny bookworm—no, not he—but a stalwart Celt, with a biceps so tremendous that his wife, proud of his manly development, used frequently to ask her friends, her female ones, of course, when discussing the relative merits of husbands, “Have you ever seen William’s muscle?” I don’t know that I ever saw it; I am certain that I often felt it, and believe now that I would have been much better informed, and at that period more devoted to my books, but for the whackings that no excuse whether just or not, could save me from. So it is with the majority of dog breakers, they invest their surplus cash in the purchase of the most formidable whip that can be found, and, with it conspicuously displayed from the yawning pocket of their velveteen coat, strut about in conscious pride, and are at once dubbed dog breakers; and truly they are dog breakers, if breaking the heart and spirit of poor canines deserves the appellation.

The dog I have found much like the child; study his character and mark his eccentricities;

when he does wrong gently admonish him, when he does well, withhold not the approbation merited. Of course, in both races a headstrong pupil will occasionally be found, when castigation becomes necessary. With this I can find no fault, but I am persuaded that unnecessary correction is too often administered to both. In the course of my life I have possessed a great number of pointers and setters, the majority of which I have broken, and, not giving myself undeserved praise, I have had among the number dogs which I have seldom seen equalled, never their superiors; and why? Simply because through kindness I got my pupils to love me, to repose confidence in me and never caused them to suppose that their love was misplaced and their confidence trespassed upon. No, no, neither is the strap the necessary adjunct of the schoolmaster, nor the dog-whip that of the instructor of the devoted, unselfish, enduring, and persevering companion of man. The dog, like the child, is possessed of affection, which can easily be won if the proper means are used, and attachment alone will induce both child and dog to do all in

their power to serve the object of their love.

Probably the most important point to be attended to in dog breaking is that the material you go to work on be well bred and well made. In a puppy two or three months old the latter is no easy thing to tell, for it is really extraordinary how they change ; but if, on the other hand, it should be nine or ten months old and possessed of the following points, you may go to work with the prospect of your labour not being thrown away : medium size, short back, strong couplings, and well ribbed up, feet and limbs large, eyes bright and intelligent. This last is, perhaps, not so absolutely necessary, for I have seen dogs with the most villainous-looking daylights possessed of wonderful sagacity, particularly among spaniels and French poodles, but I cannot consider it other than a great defect in their personal appearance. Above all things, avoid a youngster with a curly tail ; I know nothing more unsightly. The last, although the most requisite desideratum, is to know that the pupil possesses a good nose. When very

young, this is not so easy to find out, still, with attention to the rapidity with which the novice notices tit-bits of bread or meat that has been secreted, a probably correct opinion may be come at ; but when of maturer age, say old enough to be shown game, if when hunting it carries its head well up, there can be no longer room for doubt that its olfactory nerves are all right.

Your field language should always be the same, and each command be expressed by a word of one syllable, the words being as dissimilar in intonation as possible ; but it is far better to do without the voice by substituting the whistle. At all events never speak to your dog while hunting unless absolutely necessary. In early education I always accompany each order with a movement of the hand ; for instance, in saying " down " I hold up my right hand. In a short time the holding up of the hand alone is sufficient. In quartering your ground, if your dog is far ahead and you wish him to hunt either to the right or left of his present position, with one note on the whistle attract his attention, then turn in the line you wish him to



hunt, at the same time waving your hand in the desired direction. Before long, with a note on the whistle to make him look towards you, a wave of the hand will be all that is necessary to cause him to alter his course to that which may be wished.

All well-bred dogs will stand game. I believe they do it for the purpose of ascertaining the exact position of the birds, so that by a sudden direct rush they may have a chance of capturing some. To prolong this pause is the important part of the youngster's education, and for that purpose the check-string must be used. A plan that I have adopted with the greatest success is the following : —Procure some game birds (I generally use quail) ; pluck the feathers from one wing so as to reduce their powers of flight ; drop them at different places in a grass field, marking with a piece of paper the spot ; then give the birds ten or fifteen minutes' law, so that they may get over their fright and move about.

Time being up, take your pupil, with the check-string made fast to him, and hunt him up wind. As you approach where a bird has been deposited,

caution him, and appear to be anxiously expecting game. Your manner will make him doubly cautious, so that when he winds the birds he will give you credit for more capability of finding than himself ; thus your supposed ability will be appreciated, which will be shown by the desire the youngster will manifest in carrying out your future orders. Having come up to the birds, when the dog stands, tighten the check-line, bearing heavily against him

he appears determined to be headstrong, cautioning him in a soothing, confidential tone, and the instant the bird flutters up give him a sharp jerk and cause him to "down," as if the departure of the bird was his fault. Three lessons of this kind, imparted with care and proper attention—the pupil being at the proper stage in other respects—I have always found sufficient to make him steady on his point.

Why I disapprove so much the use of the voice is founded on two reasons ; first, that it is more alarming to game and more apt to cause them to be wild than any other sound, not even excepting the report of the gun ; secondly, if you keep

constantly speaking to your dogs, from hearing incessantly your voice, they become so used to it, that in emergencies they will fail to give it that prompt attention which is so desirable.

I always teach my setters and pointers to retrieve both by land and water ; with the former breed, this portion of their education I have never had any difficulty to impart, with the latter I have in one or two instances found a most decided antipathy to the aquatic performance, yet I have always succeeded in the end by following this plan. When the weather is warm take the youngsters with you bathing, with one or two more aged and previously instructed companions, wade some distance out, and then call them ; if you have gained their affection, they will ultimately come ; if you can do so without alarming them, caress them when in the water, and give them a small piece of food. After getting the puppies to wade till nearly out of their depth, cross deeper water, and if they will not come at first, hide yourself occasionally calling them ; I never knew an instance in which they would not ultimately

follow you, more particularly when they see the example set them by their more aged companions. A few lessons of this sort will give them confidence, and after instructing them to retrieve by land, they will do the same from water.

Some dogs have a natural tendency to retrieve ; with such there will be no difficulty, while others take a long time to comprehend what is desired of them : one pupil that I possessed could not be tempted for a length of time to take anything in his mouth and carry it. For days I tried to overcome this repugnance, till my patience was almost exhausted ; at last I adopted a new plan, and found it successful. I attached a long string to a ball, and after rolling it from me, he would go and nose it, but do no more ; when he was about to leave it, by pulling the ball his curiosity became excited, and he would then lay hold of it. Repeating this, it awakened a desire to retain it, and at length, as if in sheer opposition, he would keep it in his mouth and carry it with him. With others I have tried the same course, and always with good results. I do not consider any dog of the breeds

specified perfectly broken that will not retrieve from both elements ; and although I know that in England it is not generally thought a necessary part of their education, the advantages are so obvious that it does not need further comment. At four or five months old you should commence to handle your youngster. Accustom them to the roads ; it will help to overcome their timidity, and assist in hardening their feet. At six or seven months they should be familiar and conversant with the more simple portions of their education, such as "down," "heel," etc., and at about ten months game can be shown them ; but on no account permit them to do a day's work, or exhaust themselves in hunting, till six or seven months more are over their heads. As to speed, it is a common supposition that if a dog have a good nose he cannot have too much speed ; but very fast dogs are apt to run over game, and consequently flush it from the very rate they are moving at. I have observed also that those who will do the longest and severest day's work are the least impetuous. When shooting regularly, the

dogs in use should always be kept in their kennels except when in the field ; their associating liberty with their work makes them more zealous and anxious to please. On hunting days one good substantial meal, immediately after reaching home, with a piece of oaten or coarse bread in the middle of the day, will be found the best working diet ; a dog with a full stomach is in a most unfit state for work.

There is one description of dog I never would keep in my kennel, viz. one that trails his game. Some persons recommend an artifice to make him hold his head up, which is, in my opinion, all nonsense, because the fault lies in the animal being defective in scenting powers. But even if such should not be the case, and they are capable of finding as much game as the dog who ranges with his head up, you will not have the same sport, for although game may lie well to the latter, they certainly will not to the former. The birds possibly argue thus : " That harum-scarum fellow with head up, slashing along to the other side of the field after some important business, is too pre-



occupied to mind us ; as long as we lie close there is nothing to be feared." But, on the other hand, the inquiry (if birds talk to one another) will be made by some sagacious old paterfamilias, "What's that pottering dog doing down there?" All eyes are immediately directed to the disagreeable intruder in question, and very soon it becomes a decided point among the feathered family that their footsteps are being followed, and that with felonious intentions, and in preference to waiting for further information they wing their way to safer retreats. It is not because birds and quadrupeds don't talk that they don't think, particularly wild ones, when it is on a point regarding safety. When young dogs are so jealous and headstrong that they will not back one another, it is well to use them separately, along with an old and staunch favourite. A point being obtained by the senior, let the younger approach him as close as, if possible, for him to see the old dog, then make him down charge, by raising your hand, and keep him in that position till your barrels are reloaded ; but if it be attainable, the elder dog being the



furthest ahead, call up the pupil and give him the wind, afterwards slowly approaching where the first point is made, showing by both manner and voice that you are on the *qui vive*, and do not let his pace be faster than your own till the elder dog is reached, when any attempt to outstrip or go ahead of the proprietor of the find should be instantly corrected. With a little patience and repetition of these manœuvres success will be the result. I cannot recommend, however, the practice of constantly hunting old and young dogs together; for the former, from greater experience, will find more game, and the latter, seeing this, will begin to disbelieve in his own powers, and follow the veteran, that he may always be at hand when sport is obtained.

The report of the gun should invariably be the signal for dogs to drop to shot; this lesson should early be inculcated at home. To familiarize the dog with the gun, I have been in the habit of taking a pistol with me to the kennel, and all the youngsters being called into the yard, fire it, making all drop to shot; after having kept them a sufficient

time down, I would cause the food to be brought in, and with a wave of the hand permit them to rise and have their grub. To have to shout "down," keeping an eye at the same time on each of your dogs so as to enforce the order if necessary, is very unsportsmanlike, and certainly very much out of place, when all your powers of vision and observation are indispensable to mark where the departing covey are going to pitch, or the dead and wounded drop.

When seeking for a wounded or killed bird never allow your dogs to know that you have been unsuccessful. If you have given as long a time as you can spare for the purpose, and see no ultimate prospect of finding, take one of your bagged birds and drop it when the dog is engaged, then cast back that he may wind it, and thus believe that his search has not been fruitless.

The setters most in vogue at the present day I do not like nearly as much as those that were preferred twenty years ago, for this reason, that they appear to me too weedy. Such, of course, may suit the person who only shoots a few hours at a time,

and then over highly cultivated level land, but the sportsman who goes in for work, who shoots for shooting's sake and not simply to get up an appetite, to whom every day that he is out is too short, would, I am certain, find more satisfaction in the representatives of the old school. Some time since, so deeply was I impressed with this idea, that I crossed some of my stock with a well-bred but rather large cover spaniel ; the result was that the second cross were not only handsome, but animals that there was no end of work in, with great activity and energy.

It frequently happens that among a lot of youngsters you will find one most provokingly backward, who won't hunt or take any interest in the proceeding. Put a curb on your temper and have patience. You may have to wait, but gradually the apathy will wear off, and ultimately he may turn out the flower of the flock. I remember a youngster, which, until he was eighteen months old, refused to take notice of game. Two or three times a week, for months, he saw birds killed, yet all was incapable of imbuing him with the proper

spirit, for he would scarcely ever leave heel. At length the ice was broken. He got by accident among a covey, which his experience told him he would flush if he moved, and from that day a new era commenced in his life. But this is not so much to be wondered at. Cannot all of us remember some contemporaries at school who were supposed to be almost wanting common sense, but who ultimately turned out brilliant men? Intellect is not equally rapidly developed in each, and precocity is not always the precursor of brilliancy in mature life.

Having said thus much about our favourites, I can scarcely lay down my pen without expressing an idea or two on the lords of the creation. Bad sportsmen never have good dogs. The fussy, nervous, excitable person never has good dogs. It is a moral impossibility that they can be so, although they may have been most perfectly broken. In such hands they are certain to retrograde in performance, in the same way that the regiment that is perfect in its drill when under its cool and collected colonel, becomes a rabble under the irate,

irascible, nervous major. "Keep cool" should be your motto ; for if you do not, your success will only be moderate. Nothing is so destructive to both dogs and success in any pursuit as immoderate hurry. Listen, in conclusion, to the advice of an old and excellent sportsman, and you will see that his ideas much coincide with mine :—Above all things, never permit yourself to be hurried ; but when using youngsters, yes, and even old and tried dogs, perform your loading and duties with as much accuracy as a soldier upon parade, remembering that the loss of a crippled bird is nothing to spoiling a valuable dog ; for those which have courage and energy, and consequently are the most promising, will from such conduct be the most liable to suffer.

## WILDERNESS LIFE.

CIRCUMSTANCES had caused me to attach myself to a trader, who, with about twenty teamsters, was *en route* for Northern Mexico. My duties were to hunt and supply the party with game, a pleasant enough occupation, but not without danger, for the greater portion of the country we traversed belonged to the much-dreaded Camanchee, the most reckless race of freebooters and horsemen, probably, on the face of the earth, who are at war with every one, and prize nothing more than a white man's scalp. Knowing such to be the case, it behoved me to keep my weather eye open when separated from my newly-formed acquaintances, but for all my watchfulness I several times had narrow escapes. Still time fled pleasantly onwards, and as I write this, I look back with delight to the happy, free, thoughtless hours passed either in the

saddle or watching the movements of the wild animals that knew no bounds to their demesne. The Indians seldom troubled my thoughts, for I had a mare that I daily rode, handsome as a picture, and as game, fleet, and enduring as any animal I had ever thrown a leg over; thoroughbred I believe her to be, but whether or not, she was as sagacious as a dog. Between her and my bat mule there existed a most extraordinary affection. I had but to go ahead, and the latter was certain to follow, so if I did not fall into an ambuscade, I knew full well I could distance any Camanchee *braves* till I regained camp, where, behind the waggons, backed by the stalwart Missourian teamsters, who well knew the use of their rifles, I could set the redskins at defiance. Unfortunately the principal of the expedition was a most unpopular person, so what between his bullying and his unpleasant manner, a mutiny was raised among his retainers, and the consequence was that the majority started *en masse* on their own hook, to seek another employer, or find their way back to their native State.



My education and antecedents had been such as to give me a horror of mutiny ; moreover, up to this date I had nothing to complain of, so I determined to stick to the waggons, and use every effort in my power to save the owner from the only alternative that appeared to be left, viz. the deserting of all the protectors of his property in the wilderness. Ere long, however, I was compelled to change my resolution, for no one could submit to his irascible temper and constant insulting language ; so, with no companions but my mare and mule, I left the camp, one bright morning in the month of February, with the determination of returning eastward. The step was full of danger, but I preferred running the risk rather than remain to be further bullied, or seek redress by recourse to weapons, too often done in this lawless portion of the world.

As the teams were being hitched up I started in the reverse direction, little aware of the trying ordeal that was before me. My animals were in good condition and spirits. For a week I travelled north-east, in the hope of finding a suitable halting

place to remain in till spring fairly commenced. At length I came upon a spot which took my fancy—a small valley well sheltered from the northern wind, from which the snow had partially disappeared, and where there was a fair quantity of bunch grass, the most desirable food for my horses. Under a projecting rock I made my camp, and the spot was so enclosed that I hoped that the lighting of a fire would not attract attention. Weeks rolled by, and the mare and mule lost little of their condition, although the weather was frequently pinching cold. The cañons in the neighbourhood supplied me with abundance of game, and each day I expected that a break in the weather would justify a start for the eastern settlements. Of course one day was only in outline a repetition of the other, yet how widely different in detail. In the morning the horses were taken to the *bottom*, breakfast was cooked, the enjoyable pipe lit, and the direction settled in which I would hunt, returning earlier or later according to success. The afternoon would pass mending *moccasins* or clothes, cleaning arms or arranging camp, procuring

fire wood, till it was time to bring home the nags which being accomplished, and the evening meal despatched, on a bed of leaves and grass I would smoke myself to sleep, painting pictures of my distant home until no longer conscious. A hunter's camp always becomes a *rendezvous* for two or three wolves, and two of these scoundrels were seldom beyond sight. Latterly they became so tame that they would come close enough to pick up a bone if thrown to them ; and one night, when the cold was more rigorous than usual, on arousing myself to add fresh fuel to the fire, I saw one of them sitting beside the warm embers, nodding his head, like a sleepy listener to a prosy sermon. Every day I expected to be able to renew my journey. The appearance of the sky denoted change as I turned in on the last evening, but whether it was anticipation of the good things to be obtained when civilization had been reached I know not, or an unaccountable consciousness that danger was not far distant, I cannot say, but I could not sleep. First I tried one side and then the other, but without effect. As it was not cold, the fire had gradually decayed till only a few

embers remained, making the surrounding darkness more apparent. While I was hesitating whether the rebuilding of the fire or a fresh pipe would induce sleep, uneasiness seemed to have taken possession of my animals. The mule was as watchful as a dog, and as I knew that he would not leave his friend, I invariably left him untied. Several times he uttered that short, quick, plaintive snort so peculiar to the species, and always indicative of alarm, while the mare kept moving as far as her lariat would permit her. It might be anything, from a wolf to an Indian, so, as my arms were at hand, I quietly crawled out of my lair, taking special caution that no momentary flicker from the fire should disclose my movements, and by a short *détour* got beside the nags, and soon had the soft, silky muzzle of Beckey in the palm of my hand. The greatest disaster a man can suffer in such a situation is the loss either of his ammunition or of his horses. If there were any hostile redskins in the neighbourhood, by the step I had taken a stampede of my animals was now impossible. A few of the longest hours I thus sat, my presence reassuring the beasts, and, when day

broke, so still had all become, that I doubt not I should have gone asleep, only that the hour preceding day is well known to be the time selected by Indians to carry out their machinations. In the morning, quietly moving about camp, as if pursuing unsuspectingly my usual avocations, I particularly examined the locality, when, among the remaining scattered patches of snow, the easily-distinguished bruised moccasin track of an Indian was discovered, doubtless made by a brave, who in search for game had got benighted, when he had stumbled across my hiding place. My camp was therefore no longer safe ; the coming night, he, with his companions, would be back, when woe betide the solitary white man. My horses I accompanied to their feeding-ground, not permitting them to get beyond control, and as soon as their appetites were sufficiently satisfied, I returned to my little home for the last time. The few trifles I possessed were soon packed, and nothing remained further to delay me. Still, I waited a quarter of an hour longer for the purpose of building a pile of wood in which I placed some smouldering embers, in

the hope that it would not blaze up till several hours after dark—an indication that I doubted not the redskins would construe into certain evidence that I was still ignorant of being discovered. When darkness descended, I rode. Two days brought me to an outlying settlement. On my arrival at the frontier my mare had become a little tender in front from her hoofs having been worn very close. A period of rest rectified this, and, full of hope and anticipation, I pushed my way eastward, the only regret that passed like a cloud over my mind occurring as I took the last farewell of my faithful beasts.

## SPORTING DOGS AND KINDRED MATTERS.

As I have been possessed of setters and pointers, with few interruptions, from my childhood, I take a great interest in these animals. My father had a splendid kennel of the latter breed, from the termination of the Peninsular campaign till he became too old to shoot. The progenitors of his stock were a gift from a late Marquis of Ailsa, then Lord Kennedy, one of the best sportsmen and shots of his day, *vide* introductory chapters of first edition of Colonel Hawker's great work on wild-fowl shooting. These pointers were all black when young, but in maturer years often showed a sparse ticking of white through their silky sable coats. They were all quality, so were pictures to look at ; but whether they were not too finely bred for really hard, rough work would be a question



open to dispute. Of their intelligence, docility, and good manners I cannot speak too highly ; in fact, they were veritable aristocrats of their species.

During my period of service in the army I always had as many shooting dogs as I could manage to keep. These I invariably broke myself, not unfrequently assisted by Captain Peel, the author of a well-known work on dog-breaking published in America, called "Dinks" upon dogs. This gentleman, from being very short-sighted, was a bad shot, but he possessed to an extraordinary degree an undefinable power over his canine *protégés*, so as to make them understand what he required at their hands. When this point is obtained with a pupil the rest of its education may almost be considered "*un fait accompli*."

The handsomest pointer I think I ever saw I picked up in Hong Kong. For some time I had observed it running about the main street, a little east of the Commissariat Headquarters. Although in good health and condition, somehow or other I deemed that it was ownerless, and so employed one of my coolies to capture it. After being in

possession of it for a day or two, it was claimed by —whom, do you think? Well, the Sisters of Charity! The good ladies, however, after much persuasion, gave it to me in exchange for a large, fierce-looking nondescript. Where this beautiful animal (the pointer) came from I had much difficulty in discovering, for Sisters of Charity are not communicative to gentlemen visitors. At length I found out, through the means of a Roman Catholic lady belonging to the regiment, that the animal in question was brought to China by a *padre*, afterwards appointed chaplain to those of the garrison that belonged to his creed, and who had only a short time previously died when in harness. In those days the climate of Hong Kong was almost, if not quite, as deadly as that of any other part of the world. This statement can be confirmed by the records of the 59th Regiment and 1st Royals. In fact, the “Dead March in Saul” became so dinned into my ears during the sickly season, that the tune was ever uppermost in my mind, so that, when I desired to be lively, I naturally whistled it. But, returning to the pointer, after some

trouble, it was discovered to have come from Knowsley, and therefore belonged to the celebrated breed of the late Lord Derby. I never knew a more perfect animal in the field than this dog was. Although possessed of the highest courage and tenacity of purpose when such qualities were requisite—that was very often in China, for it was not unusual for half-a-dozen or more native curs to forbid your advance—yet an infant might control him. A child of “Stan’s”—abbreviation for Stanley—for such I called my favourite, I took with me to Japan. At the time I sailed this youngster had attained the proper age for commencing the serious part of his education. To while away time during what might be a long passage—possibly for no other purpose—I bought a basket of live quail. During fine weather these birds were often secreted about the deck, when, giving “Sue”—abbreviation for Susan—the wind, she would stand them as staunch as any veteran on *terra firma*.

The captain’s wife had a tame rabbit, which had the privilege of going where it pleased. Sue would draw and stand to it in a most artistic

fashion. This was the more curious as the two were great friends, always slept together, and not unfrequently fed out of the same dish.

At Nagasaki I first tried this bitch upon game. For a day or two her ideas of ranging were rather vague, but this fault was soon overcome, and before a week was passed, she became in this respect a fit rival for her father.

Captain Danniels and Mr. Ormsby, both of the *Windsor Castle*—one of Green's ships—were sportsmen, and many an hour which would have been tedious otherwise was got over in admiration of the sagacity this dog displayed under such novel and adverse circumstances. When I left the *Windsor Castle* to join the headquarters of the army at Talien-wan Bay, I, much against my will, parted with my treasure to Captain Danniels, who was quite as much in love with "Sue" as her lord and master.

A passing word for the noble dead. Ormsby, then first officer, got command of a ship on his return home, but was washed overboard during his first voyage.

"You gentlemen of England who live at home at ease, How little do you think of the dangers of the seas." Yes! the dangers that attend a sailor's profession are great now, but unquestionably were infinitely more so a quarter of a century ago.

This ship-broken dog was the first setter or pointer I attempted to break to retrieve; in my essay I was most successful, and never found this attainment in any way interfere with her staunchness.

Just before entering the army I shot a great deal with Robert Clarke, now Colonel Clarke, of "The Steeple," near Antrim. He had a red Irish setter at that time, one of the most beautiful and perfect specimens of this handsome breed that I ever saw. If a snipe or other game fell in a bog-hole or stream, "Nell" of her own accord would retrieve it; the more unpracticable the position of the dead bird, the greater appeared to be her delight in aiding her master; but on other occasions, such as if the game fell in the open, she would not touch it.

This brings me up to my American kennel,

which at one time consisted, I think, of thirteen and a half couple of setters and pointers. I broke all the dogs that I shot over, and they each retrieved perfectly, except the imported mother of the family.

To simplify matters, I will confine my remaining remarks to the last mentioned race.

"Belle," the imported bitch I alluded to, was sired by a black Irish setter, the property of the late Captain Stoddard, of the Sixteenth regiment of Infantry. This stock was at one time much valued in Galway and adjoining counties. The dam was bred at Lissmore, at the Duke of Devonshire's Irish estate, and was a heavy old-fashioned black English setter, not unlike a "Laverack" in shape, but shorter limbed. So much for the parents. Now for the daughter. A glance at Belle's *tout ensemble* told at once that she had speed and bottom. Although under medium height, she could go all day and every day, while her powers of scent were marvellous. No dog would make fewer mistakes in the field, or be more ladylike in the house, but she was never familiar, or displayed affection. When working, she per-

formed her duty and did it perfectly, without the slightest indication of jealousy, yet a worse-tempered animal with her companions could not be found. Another peculiarity she had. There were very few persons, except myself, that she would hunt for, and if they missed two or three shots in succession, off she would go disgusted, and no inducement would bring her back. Her greatest pleasure, after a hard day's work, was to be permitted to have a roll among the slain. This she would do for an indefinite period, seeming never to tire in rubbing her head, neck, and back against them, and, while so engaged, woe betide a thoughtless aggressor who approached. Her teeth were sharp, and well she knew how to use them, yet none fought with her, or disputed her supremacy. Several times I thought to teach her to retrieve, but all attempts were useless; in fact, nothing seemed so distasteful to her as to put a dead bird in her mouth. No description of cooked game would she eat,<sup>1</sup> not even venison, yet

<sup>1</sup> This is not unusual, particularly in regard to the remains of snipe, woodcock, and wildfowl.



she would stand deer as staunch as she would partridge or grouse. In fact, many a deer I killed over her in the warm days of early autumn, when these animals leave the woodlands for the rushy, damp margins of the prairie sloughs, on account of their greater coolness and freedom from flies.

Of "Belle" and her peculiarities I have said enough for my purpose, and so will now give a description of the sire of her children. Mr. Charles Wooley, of Cincinnati, Ohio, after much trouble, and at great expense, through the medium of a racing friend, Mr. Ten Broeck, of Kentucky, owner of Umpire and Prioress, obtained a black setter from the late Earl of Derby's kennel. This animal was exceedingly pretty, but defective in those very points that Belle excelled in.

The result of the cross was the very handsomest and most intelligent creatures I ever saw. Mind, reader, that I say "I ever saw."

In memory of the family that bred the granddam, the mother of Belle, I christened Cavendish setters, and this breed is doubtlessly well known

now all over the North-Western States. When I broke up my kennel, Mr. Foot, a distiller, who resided in New Jersey, bought my special favourites, and I may add all brought what might be considered fancy prices.

Now, reverting to the rearing of setters, my puppies always had daily a couple or three hours to themselves. This time they devoted to play ; when that was over, the majority would go to sleep ; the minority—the irrepressibles, and whom I have observed, generally turned out the best—then took a look round, for the reason that they had no one left disposed to play with them, to see what mischief was available ; in fact, their superior stamina made them feel conscious that they had not had enough exercise with their chums, so they would go and take a little more on their own hook. When puppies get old enough to walk a few miles without distress, I think it good for them to be taken through quiet roads and lanes with the mother and one or two staid dogs. It is wonderful to observe how the youngsters will note every action of their seniors,

and copy them, even to coming to heel, without rating or even raising the voice.

Two or three hours a day is, in my belief, quite long enough to leave youngsters alone to themselves, for they can harmlessly occupy themselves for that period ; but perpetual freedom, as with children, causes time to hang heavy on their hands, then excitement—*id est*, mischief—must be indulged in to kill *ennui*. What is the quotation ? I know I am not correct, still it will answer—Satan mischief finds for idle hands to do.

After forty years' experience, I would say, never purchase or obtain a puppy that is not well-bred, and your patience will be but little tried in breaking it ; in fact, they will educate themselves. Further, teach them all to retrieve, whether they be setters or pointers. It is easily done, and need never interfere with the dog's steadiness. By this last statement I am quite aware that many will declare that I am guilty of heterodoxy. Well, let it be so ; but I can revert, by *id quoque*—what I have proved to be a fact, from my own personal

experience, assuredly none should try to prevent my advocating. But if there are such as would sit upon me, I trust some of my brother sportsmen from across the Atlantic will come forward and help to make my burden light.

## DOGS FOR RUFFED GROUSE SHOOTING.

SEVERAL persons have written to me for information upon the above subject. In responding, I do not hesitate to tell them that authorities on the subject differ.

There are many reasons that such should be the case, such as difference in age in sportsmen, difference in capacity to endure fatigue, and difference in the country to be shot over.

It must also be remembered that the ruffed grouse (*Tetrao umbellus*) has a very extensive habitat, for it extends from well north in the province of Ontario, Canada, to Tennessee and Georgia, in the United States, the former having almost an hyperborean winter, the latter a climate as genial

as that of the south of Spain or Italy. The habits and modes of life of these birds throughout this immense region are very much the same, and would be entirely so but for the reason that familiarity with man makes them wild, ignorance of him exactly the reverse. Thus, in the States of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, where a great deal of shooting is done, the ruffed grouse requires exceedingly quick work to make a bag; on the contrary, in the lumber country or burnt lands, where they very rarely see a representative of the human family, a bough of a tree fifteen or twenty feet from the ground will be regarded by this game as a sanctuary. This does not result from a disregard for their safety, for they will gain such an asylum quick enough, but from a knowledge that having obtained such a situation that previously had sheltered them from the persecution of the animals they regard as enemies, they were safe in it.

The ruffed grouse may be considered as essentially a forest-loving bird; at the same time it will always frequent small clearings, especially new ones, where cereals are cultivated. Their visits,

however, to these cultivated areas are generally soon after sunrise or immediately after sunset; thus, in a day's shooting, when this magnificent bird is the object that the sportsman desires to obtain, much the greater part, or almost the whole of the work will take place in cover, and American cover is, as a rule, much denser than our own.

For some time I used setters entirely for wood grouse shooting, but gave them up for these reasons :—Often when they stood on game I would entirely lose sight of them, and be utterly unable to tell where they were or what they were about. Secondly, when they did by inadvertence flush the game, if it did not see the sportsman, it would not take flight, but simply hop into a bough, often almost over the standing dog's head; and lastly, what between clambering over logs, from inability to creep under them, or take advantage of the numerous runs of hares, the dogs became exhausted long before the day's work was finished, and utterly unfit to renew their exertions on the morrow.

On account of the setter possessing these dis-



advantages, friends and self introduced into America the *old Devonshire liver-coloured cocker*, and they performed the duties demanded of them most thoroughly. True, they were a little riotous at times ; but constant work and expostulations corrected these faults. As this breed may not be easy to obtain now, I will give a brief description of them. Of first importance, they should be upright, but not too tall upon the legs, and any having a tendency to imitate *dachshunds* in their limbs should be immediately rejected, in spite of the manner they are extolled at modern dog shows ; a babbler is also objectionable, while a quick, sharp voice when in close proximity to game is most desirable. The work that can be got out of a team of the breed of dogs mentioned is marvellous, and as accessories to obtaining sport, when their owner is in the prime of life, and when the shooting is confined to woodlands, their equals cannot be found ; further, for success with the Virginian partridge in cover they are equally desirable.

During a short period, in autumn, before the

early frosts have cut down the burrs, the breed of cockers above alluded to, or, in fact, any long-coated dog, should never be used in old clearings, where those pests are certain to be found abundant.

## THE CAPE BUFFALO.

UNLESS you are tired of life, the front shot—or rather forehead shot—at both African buffaloes and African elephants ought never to be indulged in; but that is no reason for supposing that some parts of their bodies are not as sensitive to mortal wounds as are those in other animals. A bullet close behind the eye or through the neck, in proximity to the vertebra, or a foot or fifteen inches behind the shoulder, so as to penetrate the heart, will as a rule immediately prove fatal to the African buffalo, but the wound to do so must come from a big bore gun, loaded with a spherical bullet, and propelled by a heavy charge of powder. A buffalo on three legs, like an antelope similarly circumstanced, seems to be but little impeded in speed and activity by such a catastrophe, so

an unhorsed sportsman would not have a ghost of a chance in the open, to escape from such a maimed and consequently enraged beast. Clumsy too, as they look, they possess for a short distance an extraordinary turn of speed. Thus, if your mount is not quick in gathering himself together and obtaining his best gait, one of these animals that gets unperceived, within say forty paces, before making its dash, will in all probability overtake you in one hundred yards. They smell exceedingly strong, not offensively to my nostrils—for it frequently reminded me of country and home life—but this scent is specially distasteful to horses. This is fortunate, as it has frequently given me a timely warning that danger is in proximity. Again, it is truly surprising how so large a beast can manage so successfully to hide itself from the human eye, even when the bush or jungle is not impenetrably dense. This is doubtless facilitated by the slate-colour of their hides when in their natural state, being invariably plastered over with mud and sand. Again, if a buffalo be detected standing facing you, it is no uncommon

thing to find that his head, horns, and fore shoulders are perfectly smothered in vines and brush, which the brute has gathered while forcing its way through the adjoining covers. This, of course, much adds to the facility of effecting concealment.

Although essentially gregarious, the African buffaloes composing a herd will not unfrequently combine to drive out an old bull that has made himself objectionable. These expelled veterans become skulkers in the vicinity of the drove, and are ever in a fierce and destructive frame of mind. This they never lose a chance of venting upon even their own species, or any animal that comes in their way. Even the mighty elephant, I have been informed by the natives, dreads an encounter with these misanthropes, and invariably gives them a wide berth when possible. But this is not always attainable, when a furious charge ensues, the power of which is almost inconceivable. The larger beast, however, soon gives way, and effects a retreat as rapidly as his giant carcass will enable him to make, trumpeting notes of

alarm to warn his companions that a dangerous enemy blocks the way. Whether a rogue elephant would so give place to the assailant, from my own experience I cannot say, but hunters have told me otherwise, and that neither pugilist would give up the contest till one or other of them became disabled. Such a fight would be well worth viewing, and be a sight never to be forgotten; but I am inclined to believe, from the superior agility of the buffalo, that it most frequently comes off victorious out of such a contest. I have not unfrequently seen the skins of old bull elephants terribly scored and slashed, especially about the flanks and hind quarters; of course, the remnants of such wounds might have resulted from the tusks of a rival of their own species, but their low down position, on the other hand, looked uncommonly like scars that would point out injuries that would inevitably result in a close-fought battle with an animal provided with weapons similar to the horns of the buffalo, and used in the manner that they are employed. It is well known that the small black rhinoceros or *borèle* will

attack anything animate, yes, or inanimate too, that comes between the wind and his nobility, as the characteristic of his whole life is, that he is ever "spoiling for a fight," and that he is apparently always on the search for the gratification of his ruling passion ; in fact, he is a regular swash-buckler and bully among quadrupeds. But I doubt very much indeed if he is more irascible than a veteran bull buffalo that has been expelled by his family. The danger of encountering either of these beasts when taking your evening stroll, if inadequately armed, I think would be nearly about the same, the odds being slightly in favour of the buffalo. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, when their superiority in numbers is considered, that the buffalo is answerable for the destruction of more human lives than any animal that ranges the South African veldt. Yet it is a grievous pity that these noble brutes should get exterminated, for I suppose this will be their end. The value of their skins predict such a fate, but their association with the tsetze-fly, if the interior of Africa is ever to be opened up



to civilization, causes the total annihilation of this grand quadruped to be a matter of absolute necessity.

To destroy the Indian races of North America, to break up the feudal system of the red man, to reduce the numbers of the aborigines of the Western Continent, was a very potent power in reducing to a minimum the numbers of *bos bonassus*; that our goods, our manufactures, and our weapons and poisons may have a new and extensive market, bubalus Kaffir is to meet the same fate.

A decade back it was popular for us to rail at the Americans for what we designated their brutal and unfeeling policy in slaughtering their indigenous wild animals; now we are about to do exactly the same thing as we reprobated in them; but in our case, try as we like, and use all means, legitimate or otherwise, that we choose, we will never get rid of the Kaffir, as they did the Indian. No, the irrepressible Kaffir will be always with us, and very possible in more intimate relations than our most enthusiastic philanthropists will desire.

I have had some exciting adventures with the African buffalo, and not the least was one with a cow. It happened in the following manner :—I had shot an old bull buffalo, and was examining my prize to learn the exact spot in which each bullet had been placed ; the natives and my own people had assembled around me, and some of the dogs, having slipped their collars at the waggon, were among the crowd, while my horse, his bridle trailing between his fore legs, grazed at a little distance. The morning was cool with a gentle breeze, the atmosphere clear and refreshing ; about a mile off were my two waggon, their snow white tilts gleaming in the brilliant sunlight, while wreaths of smoke ascended from the cooking fires. In the distance was a range of hills, with those odd flattened tops characteristic of South Africa. They were so far off that they looked as if they had been coated with a wash of faint cobalt blue. Everything about was charming and peaceful in its loveliness but for the presence of the dead buffalo. I was moralizing on the scene, and condemning myself for having killed the gallant old

veteran, and that for his hide, when I became aware that the babbling of my companions' tongues had almost ceased. The better to rest myself I had laid aside my gun and equipments, and was sitting on the carcass, of the fallen warrior with my back to the reeds that fringed a stream close by.

Suddenly, and to my amazement, the Boschmen, followed by my people, commenced to run. At first their pace did not exceed a steady double, but soon it became a regular *sauve qui peu*. I had not the slightest notion what inspired this eccentric conduct until I turned my head. Then, to my horror, forty paces distant, I saw coming directly towards me a mature buffalo cow. She was moving at that long swinging trot peculiar to her species, and well calculated to traverse rapidly heavy or rough ground. For a moment I was disconcerted, for my horse was too distant to reach, and my gun and bandolier were not accessible. In the eye of the aggressor was rage and revenge; plainly I had to deal with a lady with whom it was not safe to trifle. I assuredly thought now

that my hour was come, and it mattered little in what position I died, so I crept between the dead bull's legs, and cowered under the flank as closely as six feet of mortality could. Either the virago did not seem to understand what it meant, or she was confused by the mixed fragrance of *genus homo* and that of her own race. In an uncertain way she sniffed and snorted within a foot of my chest, lowering her head, as I concluded, to toss me ; but seemingly, on second thoughts, decided not to. Respect for her dead spouse possibly was the cause of her vacillation. Although she was absolutely mistress of the situation, she was not enjoying, upon the whole, a very good time, for my dogs were about her flanks and heels, and from what I could see and hear their teeth were not idle. At length, to my intense relief, the cow turned round to face her assailants, and made numerous vicious drives and kicks at them—which was so much strength wasted—she threw up a quantity of soil with her fore feet, and then a happy thought seemed to strike her. Why not cultivate the acquaintance of the noble horse ?

Her overtures were not received with cordiality, for as she advanced the horse retired ; yet there seemed to be no hostility on the lady's part. A horse broken in the usual home manner finding himself free would doubtless have betaken himself to the waggon ; not so Blaze (he had a white mark down his face), he would have waited where he was for my return till starvation or thirst drove him to a new scene. But as Blaze moved about he got closer and closer to me ; once or twice I tried to attract his attention by a low whistle, but no sooner was it sounded than up went the cow's head, out went her expanded ears, while her tail commenced playfully to lash her flanks. There was in her manner a warning not to be ignored, so for a time I ceased whistling. How I prayed that all the dogs would simultaneously attack her ? Being fagged, they did not, but simply laid on the ground around her, with their tongues hanging out a foot more or less.

The cow presently, tired of her assiduous watch, began slowly to move further off. I had long been conscious that a choice selection of ticks was

gathering upon my person from the carcass, under whose *environment* I was reclining, and those insects bit and tortured me more than I can find words to express. Being punctured in the most sensitive parts by red-hot needles was nothing to what I endured from those bloodthirsty wretches. The pain so caused was growing unendurable, when my horse came within about fifteen yards; the same distance—but in the reverse direction—separated me from my gun, and the cursed cow was forty yards beyond either, so I resolved to make a dash for my nag. I did so, reached him, caught the suspended reins, and with a spring was in the saddle. I drove in the spurs, but my pursuer was close up to us before Blaze was fairly in his stride. Then it became a race for life, and in speed the foe had the best of it; not much, but still the best. Every moment I expected to feel Blaze's hindquarters go up into the air. I knew that event was so close at hand that I turned round to see how the cow would do it, when my old half-bred bull-dog made a rush for the buffalo's head. Poor old dog! he had calculated without his host,

for, with an almost imperceptible movement, she caught him on her horns, and sent the plucky cur high enough to have gone over a line of telegraph wires. However, this little episode temporarily diverted her from her pursuit of myself, and gave me such law, that I had soon a clear offing.

I lost no more time than was necessary in recovering my gun and shooting her, for the spirit of revenge was in full possession of me when I pressed my trigger.

Why I had been the object of her attack I learned later. The morning of the day of my arrival at my present outspan the Boschmen had discovered, secreted on the edge of the reeds, a calf, which they speared, but the poor young thing did not die till it had summoned its dam to its assistance. The courageous mother had driven the assailants off, but too late to save her progeny's life. Since then the affectionate creature had been "ramping" about in search of a human being, on whom to avenge the murder of her offspring. I very much doubt if in the whole animal creation there is a more affectionate or solicitous mother



than the cow buffalo. The lion recognizes it, and gives a nursing matron of the species a very wide berth, even when he has before him the prospect of retiring to bed on an empty stomach.

A long day's journey on horseback to the north-east of where the escapade just described took place, there is a large area of country, the very reverse in appearance to that forming the margin of the Kalihari desert. Not only there, but to the southward, surrounding the capital of Kama, at Soochong, is such the case. If the Bamanwato Hills were better wooded, and a little less precipitous and irregular in outline, they might be taken for the scene of the following adventure :—

I had a beautiful camp in a waterless bay, surrounded by warm brown rocks. When I arrived there game was so abundant that it was no trouble to procure it, and the aborigines—Massara Boschmen—were as obliging and attentive as it was possible for a primitive people to be. But in a wondrously short time an entire change came over my surroundings, the indigenous beasts

became wilder, and the numbers of the natives fell off till not one was to be seen within the precincts of my kraal. I had not long to seek the cause of this change. An Impi of the Matabele nation was daily expected in the locality, round which their advance guard had for some time been prowling, the whole force having for its ultimate destination the rich pasture country situated in the vicinity of Lake N'Gami, where there was to be blooding of assegais, girl kidnapping, and cattle raiding galore.

I did not think that Lobengulo's warriors would harm me, so remained. But mischief had been done the locality already, for the sense of security was gone, which only a protracted period of complete repose could restore. Jansey, my principal driver, one of the most easy-going souls in the world, was with me. He was a man who always looked at the bright side of everything. He was an excellent hunter, but increasing years had somewhat diminished his ardour. In fact, at the date I allude to, he would have figured to greater advantage in the Kotla, among the grey-beard

politicians and diplomats of his tribe, than in the hunting field. John, my second wielder of the whip of office, was decidedly weak. He could either be courageous or a coward in accordance with the disposition of his chief.

As meat was getting scarce, and it was thus desirable to provide a fresh supply of beltong, Jansey and I resolved to have an extended hunt, and leave Mr. John in charge of the "home." The morning when we started was fresh and invigorating; the birds flitting through the bush were full of song. The restless bee-eaters flashed through the brakes or hovered over some dead tree like living jewels, and the little black parrots, with orange coverts to their wings, restless as is their wont, broke continually into discordant cries.

We found game abundant enough, but very wild, and as I was off my shooting nothing had been killed by mid-day. It had now become excessively hot, so we sought the shade of the densest forest we could find, and there ate our lunch. Speaking for myself, I did not feel amiable; much labour had been profitlessly thrown

away, and I was limp, and by no means up to further exertion. We had lit our pipes, and were seated upon the prostrate trunk of a tree, so that each looked in a reverse direction—the orthodox manner to avoid surprise in Africa—when my attendant touched my elbow and pointed in the direction of a game path that led to and from a large water-hole. Instantly I perceived a large boar bush-pig, followed by a number of minor members of his species, evidently on their return from the vley. The light was so uncertain and clouded that I could not take aim with any degree of certainty, so postponed firing until a better view should offer. In this I was disappointed, and the whole sounder noiselessly glided away. The withdrawal of a spectre could not have been more silent and thorough.

To follow up the pigs would have been fruitless, for the trifling currents of air that existed would certainly have warned the brutes of our presence, when it would have been impossible for a human being to overtake them. The flesh of the bush-pig is excellent, and a few meals of it would be a

pleasant change from the dry steaks and ribs of various kinds of antelope on which we had lately been almost entirely subsisting. These wild swine are very methodical and regular in their habits, so, on the morrow, Jansey and I paid an early visit to the locality, and selecting a good stand that commanded the path, made some of my people with the dogs, beat the vicinity of the water-hole.

The beat bore fruit, for I made a successful shot at a young sow. As nothing more appeared or was heard, I came from my ambush to examine the prize, but scarcely had I reached my game when I heard an animal approaching. Little doubting that it was another pig, I remained where I was, prepared to give it a warm reception. Quickly the noise grew louder, and my eyes were gladdened with a view of the patriarch boar—or his counterpart—that I had seen yesterday. Precipitously, as if on very urgent business, the old fellow came on, but a well-directed bullet soon stopped his career by breaking his spine. The poor beast struggled to regain his feet, but could not do it. As I was about to put him out of pain, I looked up,

and just beyond the boar was the unwelcome apparition of a mammoth bull buffalo, advancing at a steady measured trot. It struck me as too late to jump from the path into the bush without discovering myself, and to fire a head shot did not promise success, but I had no alternative. As the giant stepped over the wounded hog I pulled the trigger. The bullet took effect some way beneath the buttresses of the horns, and temporarily stunned him so as to bring him on his knees. Whether the boar thought that the buffalo was the cause of his misfortune, or *vice versa*, I cannot say, but they turned upon each other with the most determined ferocity. But what power of fight has a combatant with a broken back. A very poor one, indeed; so, although the boar was willing and brave to the end, from sheer incapacity he soon ceased to struggle. Long after his gallant little foe was dead, the buffalo tossed, pounded, and stamped upon him with the vindictiveness of a fury. In the meantime I was plying the enemy with lead, but every shot from my Express seemed to give him fresh vitality and increase his disposition for



mischief. How I anathematized those hollow bullets and their inventor! My antagonist seemed to take each shot I fired at him as a further compliment. At last my temper got the better of me, and made me reckless, so I thoughtlessly showed myself. The charge that followed defies description, and I only saved myself by gaining the shelter of a large tree trunk. What was my surprise to find Master Jansey there! The meeting was most fortunate, for he carried one of my heavy smooth-bores, loaded exactly with the charge suitable for such emergencies as the present. My pursuer must have gone at least twenty yards before pulling up, but by the time he did so I had the fresh weapon in my hands. Nervous I certainly felt, but very much less so than a few seconds previously. At length the bull turned, doubtless to renew my pursuit; the movement exposed his flank, when a well placed bullet settled him. If I had been the most infinitesimal particle of time later in springing behind the tree, I am convinced that my life would have ended. Why Jansey had not come to my assistance—for, with-



out my being aware of it, he had for several minutes witnessed what was passing—was the result of my having constantly lectured him on the enormity of the offence of giving aid when it was not required, he having in our earlier acquaintance a *penchant* for riddling game after it had scarcely a kick left in its body.

## ARTIFICIAL STOCKING OF LAKES AND RIVERS.

A GENTLEMAN, who is both a sportsman and naturalist, finds himself baffled in his attempts to elucidate how the trout in some of his lakes and rivers are so small, and, moreover, annually diminishing in numbers. I do not know the immediate vicinity of his property, although I have some years ago fished in the county adjoining the one in which this property is situated. It having struck me that there might be other persons similarly situated, I thought it would be well to publish the information I possess, for, although it may be limited, it might possibly lead to some of my numerous skilled and scientific correspondents following the example I set them, so that many grains of sound and practical information may ultimately be garnered, the application of which cannot fail in the end to

be beneficial to the disciples of that most charming and soul-absorbing of all sports—fly-fishing.

It appears, from the contents of my acquaintance's letter, that *Salmo fontinalis* have received from *cognoscenti* a bad character for evincing roving qualities whenever their habitat is connected with a river; in fact, that they are confirmed vagrants. Now this is not my experience of this fish—the handsomest of all the *Salmonidæ*—and I spent several years in studying its character and habits before I took upon myself the arduous task of transferring the strangers from their American residence to our home waters.

The unpronounceable words, Mollychunkamunk and Mooseluckmaguntic are the names of the lakes from whence I obtained the first shipments. I had for successive seasons fished in these waters, and as I was generally alone, and therefore had ample time for contemplation and study, I think that the deductions I arrived at were probably correct. Moreover, a most enthusiastic fisherman, a pupil of the renowned Professor Agassiz, met me on several occasions when pursuing my

favourite avocation in "the wilds"—a term strictly applicable to these forest-embedded sheets of water, for there was no settlement of any description within five-and-twenty miles of my camp—when we compared notes and questioned each other strictly on our reasons for coming to certain conclusions. There were very few points we disagreed upon, and generally, when such occurred, I found reason afterwards to adopt my more scientific friend's views. I had better state here that the gentleman I speak of was really a great scientist and abstruse scholar, to neither of which appellations I could lay claim.

However, the deduction we arrived at was that *Salmo fontinalis* were exceedingly susceptible of atmospheric influences, particularly changes of temperature. On Lakes Parmachini, Molidgewalk, and the Magalloway river I have found this peculiarity even more pronounced than in the sheets of water first mentioned. All these charming fishing retreats had one characteristic in common, namely, they were surrounded by a deep fringing of trees, most numerous among which and close to the

water would be found the willow, birch, poplar, and sum ach. The position of this district in the state of Maine was about lat. 45 deg., long. 71 deg. A good deal south of any part of England ; but, notwithstanding this fact, the winters were hyperborean, and continued uninterruptedly for quite six months in the year.

The fish in these waters were numerous, never small, and always in good condition, but they had an abundance of daphnes, limners, shrimps, loaches, and shiners<sup>1</sup> to feed upon, and a never-failing and inexhaustible supply of insects during summer ; the latter propagated, no doubt, in the arboreal surroundings of their home.

I thoroughly believe that a deficiency of food is the cause of fish running small ; to obviate this, I would introduce the crustacea, insects, and fish above mentioned, but, above all, plant in abundance such trees as I have enumerated ; they may be slow in growth, but ultimately they will render a fitting reward to those that have the patience to wait. When fishing on the waters of the State of

<sup>1</sup> A small silvery fish about the size of a minnow.

Maine that I have mentioned, very few *Salmo fontinalis* were taken under one pound in weight, while many were captured that turned the scale at six or even more pounds. However, on a red-letter day, on Lake Parmachini, just beyond the termination of the slim, whip-like fronds of a prostrate birch, where the water was about seven feet deep, and slightly agitated by the motion of the branches moved by a gentle breeze, I hooked a mammoth. My rod was made by Conroy, of New York, and carried its spring almost to the hand ; it was about eleven feet long, of perfect workmanship, and of the most carefully selected wood. Well for me it had all these qualities, otherwise I should have gone home a disappointed if not a very unhappy man. My prize weighed nine pounds, and took over forty minutes to land. Since then my record has been beaten several times by over a pound. I mention the above incident to show to what size these fish will grow when furnished with an abundance of food and a suitable home.

Now, as to the vagrant, or rather wandering habits of the *Salmo fontinalis*, I acknowledge that

they change their residence. Thus, in spring, as soon as the snow water has departed, they will be found to swarm in the rivers ; but as soon as the temperature of the water rises from the increasing power of the sun, then this fish seeks the deepest part of the loch or lake, which not unfrequently will be found in close proximity to the springs which feed the sheet of water.

On cool evenings or mornings, even in summer, this fish will be found in the vicinity of shoals, or close to the margin of their habitat, when, if there should be a breeze upon the water, they will take the fly readily. When the heated term of summer breaks, more particularly if it is succeeded by cold stormy winds, the *Salmo fontinalis* again return to the rivers and burns, where, until the open season for fishing terminates, they will afford the fisherman most excellent sport.

In Germany these American fish have succeeded admirably. Is this because the Teuton is more scientific in his treatment of them, or that they are more patient and persevering than our countrymen? Moreover, their flesh is greatly esteemed,



and justly so, to be a great table delicacy. A German friend stated to me, which confidence was afterwards confirmed in one of his country's papers that treats largely upon natural history, that so sustaining as an article of food was the meat of the *Salmo fontinalis* found to be that the aged and truly grand old Emperor William partook of it daily for the two months previous to his demise.

As to the rearing of water *animalculæ*, which forms a portion of this handsome fish's food, in my translation of a well-known French *savant's* report, the process is so thoroughly explained that I have nothing further to add, but that having once obtained your stock, never lose a chance to introduce it into all neighbouring burns and rivulets. The most suitable places for this purpose are back-waters, where there is little or no current, and in which there is a depth of from two to three inches.

Nothing is more convenient to carry these *animalculæ* in, when the distance to be traversed does not exceed a few miles, than an open-

mouthed pickle-bottle. From the contents of one such bottle, in a year or two, a fabulous amount of natural food for fish will be reproduced; for, as the author of that charming book, "A Season in Sutherlandshire," so justly remarks in his concluding chapter—his words I do not quote, because I have not the work by me, but their purport will do—that the lower the organization of animal life, the more rapid becomes its reproduction. Can any one learn this without feeling how wonderful is Nature in all her works?

A fish eminently suited for introduction from America to our seaboard lakes and rivers, for it inhabits both fresh and salt water, I would like once more to call attention to, viz. the striped bass or rock fish (*Perca labrax*).

When I introduced the *Salmo fontinalis* to British waters I should have much liked to have brought with them spawn or more matured specimens of this fish. However, their habits and natures had not then been so thoroughly studied as they are now, which threw such obstacles in the way of gratifying my desire that I was

compelled to postpone—possibly to give up—my favourite scheme.

The difficulties that existed then have happily now been overcome through the assiduous study and constant research of that extraordinary pair of scientists and enthusiasts, the Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt and Mr. Seth Green. The world at large owes them a great debt of gratitude, for not only have they published the result of their days and nights of study, but gratuitously, and at no small amount of trouble, sent innumerable shipments of pregmated ova of *Salmonidæ* to this country and other parts of Europe. America should be proud if she only possessed one of these great pioneers of practical fish culture; but when she has two, and both running together, well! she possesses in this speciality a team that no other land can boast of.

But to return to the *Perca labrax*, let me describe it. Up to 60 lbs. weight it has been captured; in colour and size of scales it much resembles the *Salmo salar*, but has thin but distinct lateral black lines running from the gills to the tail upon the silver coloured groundwork of flanks and belly.

These lines vary in number from five to nine, and give their possessor a particularly attractive appearance. As their Latin synonym will inform you, their fins, although less pronounced, resemble those of the perch in situation and shape. They are taken with fly or shrimp, fishing on the surface ; however, the largest specimens are taken with menhaden, squid, soft shell crab, or even clam.

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